Vol. VI. No. 4 OCTOBER, 1957

TAMIL CULTURE

JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE

Caldwell Centenary Number

CONTENTS

CRITICAL TRIBUTE TO A PIONEER	John Spiers	267
ANCIENT TAMIL POET-EDUCATORS	Xavier S. Thani Nayagam	273
AGASTYA—HIS NON-ARYAN ORIGIN	K. R. Rajagopalan	286
THE PERIOD OF RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN TAMIL LITERATURE	S. Arumuga Mudaliar	294
NAKKIIRAR THE EARLIEST TAMIL MYSTIC	T. P. Meenakshisundaram	309
EARLY TAMIL CULTURAL INFLUENCES IN SOUTH EAST ASIA	S. J. Gunasegaram	319
DIALECTAL VARIATION IN ELEVENTH CENTURY TELUGU	K. Mahadeva Sastri	342
EXTRACT OF LETTER	S. K. Chatterji	347
NEWS AND NOTES		348
SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION		355
THE TAMIL SCRIPT		357

All Rights Reserved *Rs. 7 yearly*

TAMIL CULTURE

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Chief Editor:

REV. DR. XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM, University of Ceylon

Members:

REV. P. CEYRAC, S. J., Loyola College

DR. A. C. CHETTIAR, Annamalai University

MR. M. M. GHANI, Divisional Inspector of Schools, Madurai

DR. K. KANAPATHI PILLAI, University of Ceylon

DR. S. G. MANAVALA RAMANUJAM, Former Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University

MR. T. P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAM PILLAI, Presidency College

DR. S. MUHAMMAD HUSSAYN NAINAR, Djakarta, (Indonesia)

DR. K. K. PILLAI, University of Madras

MRS. RATNA NAVARATNAM, Dist. Inspectress of Schools, Ceylon

MR. S. RUDRAPATHI, Central College, Bangalore

MR. M. K. SHANMUGHAM, Sir Theagaraya College, Madras

MR. V. I. SUBRAMONIAM, University of Kerala, Trivandrum

MR. P. M. SUNDARAM, Osmania University

MR. P. THIRUGNANASAMBANDAM, Professor of Sanskrit, Presidency College

DR. M. VARADARAJAN, Head of the Department of Tamil, Pachaiyappa's College

(The office-bearers of the Academy are ex-officio members of the Editorial Board)

ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE

Office-bearers for 1957-58

President:

The Hon'ble MR. JUSTICE N. SOMASUNDARAM,
Puisne Judge, High Court of Judicature, Madras.

Vice-Presidents:

MR. R. P. SETHU PILLAI, University of Madras

MR. KARUMUTHU THIAGARAJAN CHETTIAR

MR. A. V. RAMAN

MR. A. SUBBIAH

Hony. Secretaries:

MR. K. KODANDAPANI PILLAI

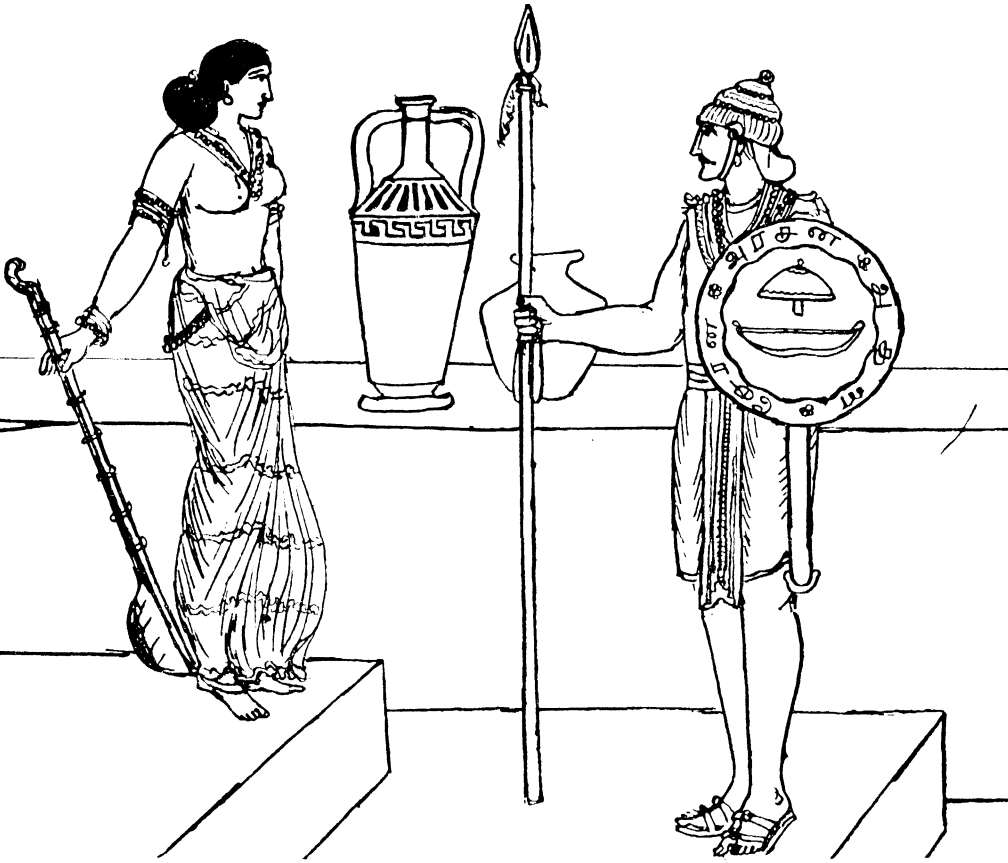
MR. C. AMRITAGANESAN

Hony. Treasurers:

MR. V. S. THYAGARAJA MUDALIAR

MR. V. SHUNMUGASUNDARA MUDALIAR

(See inside page of back cover for names of the Governing Council)



PRINCESS NAR′-CŌNAI AND KING CĒRAN′ ATAN′

A line-drawing by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji (February 1911)

Vol. VI. No. 4 OCTOBER, 1957

TAMIL CULTURE

JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE

Caldwell Centenary Number

CONTENTS

CRITICAL TRIBUTE TO A PIONEER	John Spiers	267
ANCIENT TAMIL POET-EDUCATORS	Xavier S. Thani Nayagam	273
AGASTYA—HIS NON-ARYAN ORIGIN	K. R. Rajagopalan	286
THE PERIOD OF RELIGIOUS REVIVAL IN TAMIL LITERATURE	S. Arumuga Mudaliar	294
NAKKIIRAR THE EARLIEST TAMIL MYSTIC	T. P. Meenakshisundaram	309
EARLY TAMIL CULTURAL INFLUENCES IN SOUTH EAST ASIA	S. J. Gunasegaram	319
DIALECTAL VARIATION IN ELEVENTH CENTURY TELUGU	K. Mahadeva Sastri	342
EXTRACT OF LETTER	S. K. Chatterji	347
NEWS AND NOTES		348
SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION		355
THE TAMIL SCRIPT		357

All Rights Reserved *Rs. 7 yearly*

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Rev. Dr. Xavier S. Thani Nayagam is founder and Chief Editor of this Journal. He is a member of the Department of Education, University of Ceylon.

Mr. John Spiers is Editor, *Values,* Kaggalipura P.O., Bangalore District (South).

Mr. K. R. Rajagopalan is a research student in the Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture, St. Xavier's College, Bombay, working for the Ph.D. degree in History, of Bombay University.

Professor S. Arumuga Mudaliar is Principal, Vivekananda Training College, Komarapalayam.

Mr. T. P. Meenakshisundaram is the Chief Professor of Tamil, Presidency College, Madras.

Mr. S. J. Gunasegaram, member, Tamil Cultural Society, Ceylon.

Mr. K. Mahadeva Sastri is lecturer in Telugu, Annamalai University, Annamalainagar.

Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji is an Emeritus Professor of Comparative Philology in the University of Calcutta, the President of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta and the Chairman of the West Bengal Legislative Council.

Note on The Line-Drawing by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji

The drawing which is published as frontispiece in this issue indicates the reaction of a young student with artistic proclivities to the beauty and romance underlying the Sangam Literature of Old Tamil. Dr. Chatterji as a scholar of linguistics felt attracted to Tamil and Dravidian Philology in his college days. While yet a B.A. student in Presidency College, Calcutta, he had occasion to read Caldwell's Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, and at the same time he felt attracted to Tamil literature, particularly the earliest or Sangam phase of it, by reading two books which created a profound impression upon him. One was V. Kanakasabhai Pillai's "Tamils 1800 Years Ago", which was first published in 1904 and has been recently re-printed, and the other was the late M. S. Purnalingam Pillai's "History of Tamil Literature" (first published in 1904, second edition in 1929). Dr. Chatterji as a young student of about 19 or 20 was very much attracted by the works like the *Patthupattu* and *Ettuttogai,* as well as the Epics like the *Mani-mekalai* and *Chilappathikaram,* and the works of Narkkirar and other writers were very eagerly studied by him. The devotional poems of the Nayanmars and the Azhvars were also something which deeply influenced him spiritually. The romance underlying the life of the Tamil Kings and Warriors and of Tamil Society round about the time of Christ made him essay his hand in making drawings. In his school and college days Dr. Chatterji had some flair for making pencil and pen-and-ink sketches, and in his early days he made sketches of situations from Old Tamil Literature, most of which he never kept, and he generally threw them away. A few sketches from his early college days have been salvaged by his son, and the present one is one of these. Dr. Chatterji sought to make a romantic picture of it, depicting the Princess with *yal* or lute, and the King is dressed as a warrior, in a costume which Dr. Chatterji, from what he could study of early Tamil art as in the Pallava period, thought at that time might be the proper dress of a King and a Warrior in Tamilakam. The Greek vase beside the Indian *kudam* given in the picture indicated the presence of the Greeks in India as merchants and mercinaries. Historically, and as a specimen of art, this picture is not something which is very noteworthy, but it still indicates the tremendous influence which ancient Tamil literature could exert on the mind of a young man who was reading at that time some of the greatest literary master-pieces in the different languages. At that time, Germanic literature as in Old English and Old Norse, Celtic literature through translations from Old Irish and Early Welsh, pre-Muslim Arab literature, and the literatures of ancient China and Japan, had attracted Dr. Chatterji's attention, along with the literature of Old Tamil.

This drawing by Dr. Chatterji forms a sort of homage from a North Indian scholar, while he was still at college, to the beauty and greatness as well as of the human qualities of Old Tamil literature, and to the memory of the great scholar Robert Caldwell who first studied Tamil and the Dravidian languages in their historic setting and established the Dravidian languages in an independent speech-family.

Critical Tribute to a Pioneer

JOHN SPIERS

It is to the credit of Robert Caldwell that he gave justice to a whole family of ancient living languages which, up to his time, had been largely ignored or treated with disrespect. He was and, astonishingly one must confess, still is *the* pioneer. The fact that only last year his Comparative Grammar, revised and edited by two scholars, was published by the University of Madras, is sufficient evidence that in this field of comparative philology he is yet to be surpassed.

Books on South Indian languages are still being printed and sold both abroad and in India almost solely for the use of employers of labour. They are quite openly full of the idiom of master and servant, intended for the housewife and the estate manager. They reflect a still surviving mental attitude of contempt. Bishop Caldwell's religion gave him a freedom from the commercial and imperialist caste prejudices of his European contemporaries and their Indian fellow travellers. He was the first in modern times to present a new and fair picture of the South Indian languages and Tamil particularly as the purest of the group or the most free from outside infiltrations. Along with his fellow missionary, Dr. Pope, he brought to the light of modern scholarship and the general intellectual public, the existence of an abundant and beautiful literature, as far beyond the level of the backyard, the bazaar and the plantation, as the language of Shakespeare and Shelley stands above the level of the English of Billingsgate or the Liverpool slums. Taking into account his time and its politics, this was a grand and bold achievement.

That to our lasting benefit the scholar in Caldwell surpassed the ecclesiastic, can hardly be denied. In this he was purer than Pope whose Christian slant to a large extent mars his otherwise wonderful labours. Of course, the aim of both (as well no doubt as of their successors today) can hardly be said to be disinterested. A missionary must know the language thoroughly into which he means to translate his scriptures and preach his doctrine.

It can hardly have been in either Caldwell's or Pope's mind to imagine however, that their great work could easily be used *volte face,* for a purpose quite the opposite of what they intended. Indeed, the present Centenary itself honours their labours in initiating the renaissance of Tamil literature which, being predominantly infused with philosophy and religion, acts rather more as a brake than as a support, of Christian missionary effort. The very publicity that Caldwell and Pope gave to ancient Tamil literature as corroborative proof of the unity of teaching and wisdom between say, Christian texts and works like the *Tirukkural*, could also, and with more justification, establish the anterior superiority, in many respects, of the wisdom of the Tamils — free certainly for example, from the notions of original sin and fears of hell and with a positively generous toleration of other faiths ! The advantage of a knowledge of any Eastern language for the scholar, provided he is able to adopt the Eastern modes of life and thought sufficiently, is that in his freedom from much of the vast conditioning of an alien Western background, he obtains a new insight into human affairs, human values and the relative importance of human beliefs. One may say that in both Caldwell and Pope, this widening of the personality by their adoption of South Indian ways, did transform their lives. Thinly veiled under the Christian dress, one can see the stirrings of the South Indian. Their Christianity was bound to undergo a revaluation itself, even as a South Indian living in Paris and speaking French, must have many of his

ancestral notions revalued by contact with the life and civilization of Europe.

There is however, this to be added, that Christianity itself being by Oriental affinity closer to the actual life of South India than to the industrial aggressive West, it was perhaps easier for the adoptive Christian than for the neutral or pragmatic scientist in the make-up of any scholar like Caldwell, to achieve the cultural transformation.

Such a cultural acclimatization is exceedingly rare. During the very early years of the East India Company, when the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal had its nest of scholars and Oriental enthusiasts, there was a hopeful birth of a new understanding. But after 1857 and the change in imperial policy, the philistine doctrines of Macaulay prevailed and the promise of the early scholars faded out.

Against that culturally tragic background, one cannot but admire the lonely effort of Bishop Caldwell, even though he may have been protected from common disapproval by his holy office. Doubtless he was heavily censured behind the scenes for taking an undue interest in the language of coolie and pariah, and may be even ridiculed by the philistines for presenting a literature as old at least as the Homer beloved of Macaulay. It is therefore only right that Robert Caldwell should be honoured at last as the man who restored to its proper place a group of living languages still vital, which have survived while their many contemporaries of the pre-Christian centuries have long since perished in antiquity.

It is relevant to the memory of the good work initiated by Caldwell, to indicate what yet remains to be done. It is not too bold a claim to say that the correction of the whole of Asian history and pre-history (and therefore ultimately the history of humanity) depends upon the proper study of the sources of Dravidian culture, society

and language. Something has been attempted by the evidence of the Indus Valley civilization. But it is not only these links in India itself. The whole field of religion, spirituality and philosophy cries out for an unbiased approach, and the final abandonment of orthodox conservatism. Idolatry and other manifestations of the spiritual values precious to humanity have all to be approached with sympathy by the true scholar. In South India and through South Indian ways of life we can understand the meaning of many an ancient Greek and Roman text which would otherwise be dismissed as nonsense or gross superstition by the fixed conditioning of a scholar reared in a European environment. What an eye-opener it is to read say, Herodotus, through the cultural and psychological and religious mind of a South Indian Saivite, rather than through the mind of the Westerner who, if he has any beliefs at all, has but two, those of materialism which refuses to consider anything other than in mechanistic terms, or credal moralising Christianity, which is always on the defensive in asserting its ethical superiority and cannot ever look with equality either on the extinct ritual of Dionysian Greek religion or on the living Saivite religion of modern India.

Indeed, the whole pre-Aryan world from the shores of the Atlantic to the islands of the Pacific has to be studied and compared, bringing every bit of mental equipment and scientific discipline to bear on its study. As Diringer says, the Alphabet is a key to the history of mankind. So also is the comparative study of languages (in whatever script they are written), while customs, and all the other sciences have to be co-ordinated, inclusive of archaeology, anthropology, epigraphy and palaeography, climatology and hydrology. And to all of these must be added an essential sympathy and insight, with the use of a properly boldly loosed imagination.

Indian history has been vitiated by an obsolete attitude to Sanskrit. Even Caldwell in his Introduction to his work,

gets carried away by the quantitative and uncritically accepted notions which down to the present still dominate as they dominated India for political reasons even 1500 years ago, or more. One of the chief errors is the curious notion that the prakrits and their modern descendents (Mahratti, Bengali, etc.) are descendents of Sanskrit. By derivation (Sanskrit = constructed or artificially formed), it is obvious that the reverse of this is true, and that Sanskrit was descended or rather invented, like a literary or sacerdotal Esperanto, from the prakrits. This is not to decry the nobility of Sanskrit or its grand philosophic content. To bring into actual historical record fanciful holy notions derived from puranas either in Sanskrit or Tamil, is not doing real justice to history or to the respective languages themselves. Their perennial philosophical or literary content should not be confused with relativistic matters such as politics and the social claims of religious or other groups in ascendency or decline. Caldwell can be more excused however, than the moderns, who have evidence enough if they will look for it, for more exact conclusions.

Another scholastic blemish in this field of Indian historical research is the solipsist circular quotation of each other by writers and experts. A quotes B who quotes C and C quotes B and A, and so forth. Given sufficient academical labels, much of what passes for high scholarship is nothing more than lazy mutual admiration, little better than the work of clever schoolboys. And as soon as a Father Heras starts a line of daring imaginative research, the timid hurl all their " authorities " upon him. The real scholar's authorities are the plain evidence, plus the logic of his own mind and his insight.

All this is relevant in our assessment of Caldwell and in the development of the work he initiated. Though his theories are outmoded his work done is solid and lasting. He exposed the Lemurian fancies (on p. 10 of his Introduction) as due to a spelling mistake (a lambda for a delta)

by Ptolemy. Another Jesperson is needed to give proper comparative affinities between the world's languages and the Dravidian group, and particular attention must be given to the early languages of Mesopotamia and to Aramaic and Ancient Egyptian, before the last word can be spoken or written on the origins of the Dravidian family of languages. Here is a great field for fresh study by young South Indians.

Due to pioneers like Caldwell, South Indian culture has at last achieved world recognition. *Tamil Culture* itself shows this fact. The temperamental reluctance of the Tamil to speak up boldly, and his age-old indifference to what the rest of the world thinks, on the ground that it is immodest to put oneself forward and that truth will somehow prevail in the domain of letters without the human medium intervening, will hardly do in the modern world of blaring loudspeakers and rotary presses turning out biased travesties of history. While the negative nature of the average South Indian has inspired or induced many wonderful and treasured contributions to the world's contemplative literature, it is surely the work of the real scholar to defend the contemplative and provide his precious gems of spirituality with a proper setting. This is the work of the scholar and the scientist. Dravidian India must find its own voice—it can no longer depend upon rare Caldwells—and publications like *Tamil Culture* should be far more widely supported by generous funds and foundations, while retaining that essential independence and freedom of expression which alone makes such a journal alive.

And when the final definitive history of South India is written, the great contribution of Bishop Robert Caldwell will have its honoured place. Such a history will be his greatest memorial.

Ancient Tamil Poet-Educators

XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM

The role of the poet as educator of groups of disciples as well as of the community in general corresponds to a society in which kingship prevails, and the chieftaincies and clans have been welded into feudal monarchies. With the evolution of a chieftaincy into a larger political unit embracing other chieftaincies, an additional dignity is attached to the singer of praise the range of whose vision and whose gifts have to be broader and more elevated than those of the bard. Political and social life are developed on a larger scale and with a more extensive and variegated background. The problems which confront the king and his administration as well as society are much more complex and include moral and ethical values involving inter-action between individuals and groups. The inflow of wealth into the capital cities and the seaports makes the problem of wealth and poverty, of taxation, trade, war, peace and good government, subjects of reflection on the part of the poets who have become the friends and counsellors of kings. Thus, from the panegyric role of the bard, emerges the poet of a complex and wealthy stage of society, relinquishing popular entertainment and education to the bard, but retaining for himself and developing those aspects of formal teaching which were contained among the bard's functions.

The increase of wealth and splendour at the court, the higher and more universal values with which the poet deals, his cultural activities at courts, and his friendship with the royalty of the land and his interventions with kings on behalf of his friends confer on the poet an aristo-

cratic standing even though the poet is almost entirely dependent on royal patronage.[1]

The poems which describe the rule in the Tamil monarchies show that kingly society was developed on a money economy and that there was wealth and affluence in the royal household. The forest defences, the regular armies and provisions made for the elephants, the horses and chariots of warfare, the different parts of a palace and their costly appointments, the gold and silver vessels in which food and drink are served, and the imported articles of ornamentation in the royal households are evidence of the economic prosperity which marks the poetic stage of culture correlate of an aristocratic tradition of education. The organisation of clan has given place to the feudal monarchy and the bard's functions in tribal forays are taken over by a formal war-drum, enthroned in the palace, the sounding of which summons a regular army in the hour of danger.

The Tamil kingdoms during the poetic period are predominantly agricultural, commercial and militaristic.[2] The Tamil kings encounter their rivals not only on land but also on sea, and navies and naval battles are recorded in the poems.[3] Neduncēralatan, victorious alike on land and sea, is said to have taken into custody a group of Roman soldiers, probably stationed in a territorial concession near Cochin, and released them only after the payment of a ransom.[4] This period (first century A.D.) is also the period of the largest volume of trade of the Tamil kingdoms with the Roman Empire. From the Tamil country the

---

1 Cf. ARNOLD HAUSER, *The Social History of Art*, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 71-130. Page 124: "The poet is looked upon as the guest-friend of his patron, even at times when he is utterly dependent on him".

2 S. KRISHNASWAMI AIYENGAR, *The Beginnings of South Indian History*, p. 59 ff., Modern Printing Works, Madras, 1918.

ID., *Ancient India and South Indian History and Culture* Vol. I, p. 435 ff., Vol. II, p. 668 ff., Oriental Book Agency, Poona, 1941.

3 E.g., *Puram.*, 66, 126, 130.

4 *Patir.* See K. N. SIVARAJA PILLAI, *The Chronology*, op. cit., p. 117.

Roman Empire received spices, fine muslins, pearls and beryls and in exchange for these commodities Tamil India received gold and silver, wine, coral, crude glass, lamp-stands and gold and silver vessels.[5] Hence there was a surplus economy and a progressive grow.h of cities, not only of the inland capitals like Kārur and Kūdal (Madurai), but also of the many sea-port towns which were important in the sea-trade, for instance, Musiri, Tondi, Korkai, Kaveri-paṭṭinam, sea-ports on the western and eastern coasts of Southern India which were nourished by secondary industries and foreign trade. Thus more people were released for occupations other than primary production, and thus opportunities were created for the introduction and development of formal education. Though Tamil society continues to cherish the values of a warrior society and even voluntary suicide by fasting to death is undertaken to vindicate a point of honour in the same manner as the religious suicide of the Jains,[6] there is an insistence on intellectual perfection and a moral enrichment and an uninhibited development of music and other arts in addition to the warrior ethics and arts of the bardic period. From the warrior ethics developed gradually more universal values. For instance, the Kōsar, a fierce and warlike tribe, are said to be as true to their word as are their arrows to hit their targets.[7]

What are the differences in function which appear between the categories of bard and of poet ? The bard is a peripatetic with his troupe and his family whereas the poet journeys alone ; the bard and his troupe entertain, act plays, sing, praise and dance and use musical accompaniment, whereas the poet instructs and counsels as one having

---

5 See MORTIMER WHEELER, *Rome Beyond the Imperial Frontiers*, p. 141.

J. M. CASAL, *Fouilles de Virampatnam-Arikamedu*, Librairie Klincksieck, Paris, 1949.

PIERRE MEILE, *Les Yavanas dans l'Inde Tamoule, in Melanges Asiatiques*, pp. 85-123, 1940-1942.

6 *Puram.*, 65, 66, 236.

7 *Puram.*, 169. *Kur.*, 15, 73.

authority, scholarship and learning with an unaccompanied technique of poesy ; the bard is the voice of the community, whereas the poet goes under his own name and his poems are mostly personal, expressive of his own relations with his patron and his own reflective thoughts ; the bard is more the entertainer of the people and of the court while the poet is found mostly in the court and in gatherings of poets of his own standing and learning ; the bards sing panegyrics, martial exhortations and heroic verse, while the poet's preoccupations even when praising a king's value are with human conduct and ethics and morals ; the bard may be found in the battlefield during this period to exhort the troops to bravery, but the poet has no place in the battlefield except as a peacemaker or through excess loyalty to a king or chief who is his valued friend. The Tamil names for a bard and his troupe were derived from roots which are associated with music, drama and dance, while the name for a poet is associated with a word which signifies general knowledge, reasoning and learning.[8]

That the period represented by the anthologies was truly a poetic stage of culture and education is admirably illustrated by comparing it with the subsequent epoch of the longer poems, the *Silappatikāram-Manimēkalai* period when the place of the poet has been almost taken by the religious teacher and the philosopher. The poet seems to vanish from the foreground and it is the philosopher who uses the language and the conventions of poetry. But during this poetic stage, the number of poets and the range of their activities more than amply illustrate the formal function of education which they performed among their groups of disciples and the informal education which they imparted as the moral guides, informal law-givers and counsellors of society. K. N. Sivaraja Pillai has distributed the four hundred and fifty-nine Tamil poets of the earlier anthologies over ten generations extending from 50 B.C. to 200 A.D., which gives an average of about forty

---

[8] Compare Panan, kuttan, virali with pulavan.

for each generation of twenty-five years. From the several allusions to gatherings of poets at the courts and the institution of poesy as the educational technique of the age, we may rightly infer that the average of forty poets for each generation represents but a very small number among their contemporaries whose works have perished.[9]

An analysis of these poets and poetesses according to their places of origin shows that they belonged to various cities, townships and villages of the Tamil kingdoms, and an examination of the occupational and social groups to which they belonged shows that the poets and poetesses came from royalty, from agricultural and merchant classes and from various trades and crafts. Of the one hundred and forty-seven different poets in the *Puranānūru* anthology alone, about fifteen are women and fourteen are kings.[10] This and other anthologies include princesses and men and women of different groups, such as the mountain and marauding clans, as well as medical men, mathematicians, astronomers, carpenters, blacksmiths and potters.[11] Avvai, the most renowned of the poetesses, moves about royal courts and is as much the friend of kings and chiefs, their counsellor and as powerful a teacher of Tamil society as any of her poet contemporaries. The names and occupations of the poets and poetesses of the Tamil country show that learning and poesy were not restricted to any particular sex or occupation and that poetic composition was indulged in not only by professional poets but also by others who found in poetry an accepted form of expressing their knowledge, their thoughts and their emotions.

The bards and poets by their frequent visits to kings and chiefs all over the Tamil country brought about a

---

9 K. N. SIVARAJA PILLAI, *The Chronology*, op. cit., p. 192. S. VAIYAPURI PILLAI, *History of Tamil Language and Literature* in TC Vol. III, (1954) p. 346 ff.

10 See S.I.SS.W. Publishing Society, *Lectures on Purananuru* (Tm), p. 30 ff.

11 Cf. *Puram*, 30, 1-6.

certain cultural, language and literary uniformity within the Tamil kingdoms, and contributed not a little to political stability, unity and understanding between various Tamil kings and chiefs. Further their frequent allusions to cities, festivals, friendly meetings of kings, to celebrated patrons and to famous battles established a sense of tradition and history within the Tamil country.

Tamil society had its own religions. The anthologies contain references to the worship of Murugan, Siva, Viṣnu and other lesser deities, but the priests of the religions at this stage do not appear to have formulated even formal systems of religious education. Probably a strong current of Saivaite philosophy and personal devotion (bakthi) to the God of one's choice was existent, but, unlike the North Indian society, Tamil society included no dominant priestly caste or organised monasticism to impart even an " official " religious education. Neither did Tamil society have a revealed book or revealed scriptures to establish ethical and moral norms. The poetic period in the Tamil country was like the poetic period in Greece, and the poets themselves, and not priests, were the teachers of ethics and morals.[12]

The social standing of the poets in the Tamil country is shown by the numerous examples of poets who refuse to be slighted by kings and curse kings and chiefs and rebuke them should they fail to confer on them the regard, patronage and gifts which are their due.[13] A poet who is slighted by a king hastens to another chief famous for

---

12 The following article by an eminent Hindu scholar is important as confirmatory evidence of the conclusions reached in these pages with regard to early Tamil religion.

SWAMI VIPULANANDA, *The Development of Tamilian Religious Thought* in TC Vol. V. (1956) number 2, p. 254 ff.

See W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, op.cit., p. 148: "In the age of the Presocratics, the poet was still the undisputed leader of his people; and he was being joined by the lawgiver and statesman. There was no change in this situation until the rise of the sophists ".

On the cultural history of ancient systems of education see

WILLIAM A SMITH, *Ancient Education*, Philosophical Library, New York, 1955.

13 *Puram*, 196, 250-211.

his gifts, returns with an elephant received as a gift from the chief and ties the elephant to a tree in the defence-thickets of the king who slighted him, an act tantamount to an insulting declaration of war.[14] Another poet discriminates between two princes whom he meets, embraces one and does not embrace the other. On being asked by the prince who was slighted why he should have treated him so, the poet replies:

"This other prince belongs to a family which, if the chief were away from home, has conferred gifts to us (poets) through their women-folk who would even adorn themselves for the occasion; but you belong to a family which has shut its door in our face. Since then we have avoided your hills".[15]

The poet Kapilar, a great friend of Pāri, a patron chief of bards and poets, advises the kings who besiege his mountain fortress that it cannot be taken by elephants and armies. They might capture it if the kings went dancing and singing with bardic troupes following them.[16] A poet's praise is accounted worthy of heaven while his curse results in an entire town ending in ruins so that the town remains only a memory and a name.[17] Something of the fierce moralising of the Hebrew prophets and their championship of social justice and truth is seen vested in the Tamil poets, and this is no surprise, since it is the prophetic function of original shamanism which appears developed among the Hebrew prophets while the poetic function of the shaman is found developed in Tamil society.

The social prestige of the Tamil poets is again evident in the manner in which they are received and feasted at

---

14 *Puram*, 162.
15 *Puram*, 151.
16 *Puram*, 109, 15-18.
17 *Puram*, 27 and 202. In *Puram*, 72 the young sovereign who has composed the poem swears that should he fail to achieve victory against the other kings who have joined against him, may he turn out to be an unrighteous sovereign whose subjects curse his cruelty, and may his territory be forever forsaken by the band of illustrious poets headed by Mankudi Marutan.

courts, and in their frequent interventions in political affairs, often counselling against war either because of its baneful effects or because of the power of the enemy, sometimes urging Tamil unity against non-Tamil foes, or a confederation of two or more kings, or dissuading unjust taxation or pleading on behalf of rebel sons and subjects and innocent victims condemned to torture.[18] The kings had their assemblies of counsel and government, but the poets enjoyed an advisory and teaching capacity even more than they. The following poem which urges the minor king Pēkan to return to his lawful wife whom he had condemned to a life of loneliness is a subject about which four celebrated poets have sung poems upbraiding Pēkan and interceding on behalf of his lawful queen, Kaṇṇaki, that he might live with her again. Arisil Kiḷar is persuasive even in his imperious manner :

> " Be thy rare gems and treasures what they may,
> We seek not these, O Pēkan, great in war,
> When with our little lyre, in tender strains,
> The fruitful fields of thy good land we sing,
> If pleased. thou boon on me bestow, O King,
> Thy spouse, erewhile with choicest gems adorned
> Now suffers bitter grief because no love is hers.
> Let her this night perfume her tresses bright
> Like pea-fowl's plumes upgathered by the wind,
> And wreathe her brow with fragrant blooms—
> Yoke to thy mighty car thy swiftest steeds ".[19]

Another poet dissuades a king from a heavy taxation of agriculturists. As the economy became diversified and as foreign trade brought greater wealth, rulers seem to have overlooked agrarian welfare. The poet points out that even " the victory of the army that is engaged in a last-ditch combat is the result of the efforts of the army of the plough " and adds :

---

18 See e.g., *Puram*, 43-47, 58, 92, 95, 97, 102, 104, 109, 110, 143-145, 212-213, 246, 336. Cf. Patir, *passim re* gifts given to poets.

19 *Puram*, 146. The translation is by G. U. POPE in IA. See also 143-145 and 147.

"If thou has marked and known this well
Reject the wily counsels of malicious men,
Lighten the load of those who till the soil,
The dwellers in the land protect. If thou do this
Thy stubborn foes shall lowly bend beneath thy feet".[20]

There occur in the *Puranānūru* anthology accounts of close friendship between kings and poets. Some of them even choose to die of voluntary starvation together with their royal friend when he decided upon that warrior manner of death.[21]

Learning and poesy were transmitted at this stage by formal discipleship. The titles of some of the poets in the colophons indicate that they were renowned teachers and had famous disciples.[22] Two aspects of learning were said to make the complete man, *kalvi*, the positive, personal effort at learning and apperception, and *kēḷvi*, the student's acceptance of instruction imparted by another. The word *kēḷvi*, literally "hearing", shows the oral and aural origin of learning, and even the most learned poets are praised by the contemporaries because of their twofold competence, their learning and their having heard instruction from learned men.[23] Both personal effort and learning by hearing learned men are of little value unless the learner acquires the ability to impart his learning by clear, coherent, logical discourse and convince his hearers in the assembly of learned men (avai) or in the assembly of the king's advisers. The ideal of the poetic stage of education is a preparation for prominent civic life and the scene of intellectual activity shifts from the village community centre (manṟam) to the royal courts and assemblies of learned men. The life of learning is for the purpose of service to the community, and if time is expended

20 *Puram*, 35.
21 *Puram*, 214-223.
22 The titles added to the names indicate and differentiate between the more celebrated and the less celebrated poets and sometimes show the lineage of discipleship and special teaching functions.
23 E.G., *Puram*, 26, 12, 53, 12, 72, 13. See *Tirukkural*, Chapters 40 and 42.

in the acquisition of wealth it is in order that that wealth may serve those who are in want and that hospitality may be increased.

Though about twenty-two poetesses are counted among the four hundred and fifty-nine persons whose poems are found in the anthologies, no system of formal instruction is outlined for women. There is no strict segregation of the sexes, and courtship and mixed dances are described as popular, and women accoutred with daggers are found serving even in war-camps.[24] The ideal which is constantly kept before women in the Ancient literature is that of the chaste, loyal and loving wife. In a culture in which plants and flowers acquired a high degree of symbolism, chastity and marital love and loyalty are symbolised by the whitest and most fragrant of indigenous flowers, the mullai (jasmine). Poetic conventions in the *Tolkāppiyam* and in the anthologies have young women trained in aristocratic fashion and amidst aristocratic surroundings by an elderly nurse (sevili) with the companionship of a maid (tōḷi) who are both experts on the depths of love psychology plumbed by the Ancient Tamil poets.[25]

The universal value of formal education is stated in an oft-quoted poem in which formal education is taken for granted as the basis of self-realisation and recognition by the world :

" It is good to learn though it may involve a humble discipleship, humble service and paying an emolument. A mother among her many children is apt to like him most who is distinguished (by learning) ; among a group or class the king is apt to follow the counsel not of the eldest but of him who is well instructed, and even among those (Āryans) who preserve a fourfold division of society,

24 *Mullaippattu,* (Ten Idylls) 45-49.

25 E.g., *Puram,* 116. *Nar,* 159, 331. *Aham,* 190.

suppose one of a lower caste were to be known for learning, one of a higher caste would be compelled to respect him (or seek his help)." [26]

The education and learning which are referred to in this poem and understood in the anthologies is not religious education even when learned men are known as "resplendent men ".[27] It is a learning which perfects the learner and equips him for this life and for an honoured place in the assemblies of learned men and of the elders of a locality. It is no world-denying learning but one which affirms the world, its joys, and finds a self-sufficiency in human powers. It has a great love for children and for the home and knows little of a state of homelessness.[28] It is an education which equips the learner for courtship, marriage and a life of altruism. A great hero of the period, Āy, a warrior chief and patron of bards and poets is praised because he does not do good for "mercenary motives, in order to win praise in this life or happiness in the next ", or because of the example of wise men but because good should be accomplished for its own sake. A. C. Bouquet has no grounds whatsoever to assume that "self-forgetful service of others" is in origin a Christian idea.[29] Altruism and "living not for self but for others" is recommended because of its own intrinsic worth and not for any future reward or for the benefit of a future birth.[30] Albert Schweitzer has pointed out the discovery of this ethic of goodness and benevolence in the *Tirukkural,* but it occurs even earlier than the book of gnomic verse and is an active and creative concept among a people whose literary records testify to a humanism, an optimism and an altruism which are the fundamental characteristics of ancient Tamil culture as yet uninfluenced in the main

26 *Puram,* 183
27 E.g., *Oliyor* in *Puram,* 539.
28 The anthologies of love poetry and the *Tolkappiyam* amply demonstrate this humanism. See, for instance, *Puram,* 188.
29 *Comparative Religion,* op. cit., p. 147.
30 *Puram,* 134, 136, 20 ff.

by the priestly and monastic cultures from Northern India.[31]

In order to assess this Tamil humanism one has to consider the entire complex of attitudes prevalent and fostered in Tamil society, and the abstractions and universals which comprise the conscious and unconscious metaphysic of the age as expressed in the anthologies. The love poetry and the panegyric poetry show the range of psychological insight of the poets themselves and the *Tolkāppiyam* is probably derived from one of the several compendia which existed as aids to the study of the phonetics, grammar, prosody and the conventions and psychology which were to guide poetic compositions. Life is considered pleasant and joyful, and death a sad ending; there is no attempt to obtain release from life except to vindicate honour and bravery and the love for a husband who has passed away; there is a note of nostalgic sadness in the poems about senescence and old age; liberality and ethical goodness are indulged in without motives of expiation and penance; rebirth is seldom spoken of in the earlier poems but the life after death is represented as an abode of permanent happiness for the good and permanent suffering for the wicked; happiness in the future world is conceded only to those who by their bravery and altruism have established their glory in this world;[32] love and courtship, marriage and children are considered necessary modes of human fulfilment and perfection of personality; and the norms and ideals of statecraft, ethics, truth, justice, equity, gratitude and love which run through the anthologies and the *Tirukkural* seem to make by comparison Kauṭilya, Manu and Vatsyayana small, exclusive and petty in the ideals and concepts they teach of moral and ethical goodness.[33]

---

[31] ALBERT SCHWEITZER, *Indian Thought*, op. cit., p. 200 ff.

[32] *Puram*, 50, 14, 18; also see 18, 13, 21, 13, 24, 34, 135-6, 165, 174, 179, 9; 206, 8.

[33] ALBERT SCHWEITZER, *ibid*, p. 201:

"What a difference between the *Kural* and the Laws of Manu which originated some four centuries before it! In the latter under the domin-

The following poem tersely expresses certain dynamic and creative thoughts underlying the poetic period :

> " Does this world really exist ? If it does, it is because therein live persons who if they came by even Indra's nectar would not consume it selfishly alone ; they bear ill-will towards none ; they fear not nor quail before what others fear ; they waver not. With ideals of striving not for their own good but for the good of the rest of men they live—hence one may believe the world exists ". [34]

This development of secular poetic thought was not to blossom forth immediately into a full and pure philosophy as it did in Greece. The political movements in India and Ceylon and international trade were bringing Indian kingdoms and foreign countries into very close relationship, and the political and commercial routes were also the highways along which Vedic Brāhmanism, Jainism, Buddhism and Ājīvikism travelled to the Tamil kingdoms. The *Silappatikāram, Manimēkalai* and the *Tirukkural* represent an age of philosophic thought, religious and secular and of inter-cultural contacts and inter-cultural conflicts.

---

ance of the Brahmanic spirit, world and life affirmation is still just tolerated alongside world and life-negation. In the *Kural* world and life-negation is only like a distant cloud in the sky ".

[34] *Puram*, 182. See *Aham*, 55. High ideals are constantly emphasised. See simile in *Puram*, 69,5.

Agastya—His Non-Aryan Origin

K. R. RAJAGOPALAN[1]

INTRODUCTION

References to Agastya are found as early as the Rigvedic literature. He is generally considered as a Vedic Rishi and to him is attributed the composition of some of the Rigvedic hymns.[2] Fuller references to him are made in the epics, puranas and Tamil literature. He is regarded as the pioneer in the expansion of Aryan culture over South India and hence his importance and significance to many.[3] Obviously the various traditions that are associated with Agastya could not have related to one person only and it may be assumed that these traditions cover different members of the family of Agastya belonging to different generations. The origin of Agastya and his family is still shrouded on obscurity and scholars have paid little attention to the problem. Pargiter, for example, says that there is nothing to show when or how the Agastyas arose.[4] In a different context the same author writes that the Agastyas arose later but that their origin is uncertain.[5] An attempt is made here to point out the pre-Aryan and non-Aryan origin of Agastya and of his family, on the basis of

1 The writer records his thanks to his guiding-professor Dr. L. B. Keny for the encouragement received from him in the course of the present study.

2 R. V. I, 165-191.

3 *e.g.* cf. M. Srinivasa Aiyangar, *Tamil Studies*; Caldwell, *Dravidian Comparative Grammar*; D. R. Bhandarkar, *Some Aspects of Ancient Indian Culture*; V. Rangacharya, *History of Pre-Musalman India*, II, Pt. I; C. S. Srinivasachari, *Historical Interaction Between the Deccan and South India*, Carmichael Lectures (1918); K. N. Sivaraja Pillai, *Agastya in the Tamil Land*; K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, (a) *History of South India*; (b) *Agastya, Overgedrukt uit het Tijdschrift voor. Ind. Taal—, Land— en Volkenkunde Deel LXXVI*, Jaarg. 1936 Afl. 4.; O. C. Gangoly, The Cult of Agastya: and the Origin of Indian Colonial Art, *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, XVII, No. 3.

4 *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, (1922), p. 240.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 304.

references to (i) the story about his birth, (ii) the etymological significance of the name Agastya, (iii) his association with spells, charms and witchcraft as found in the Vedic literature, (iv) his association with the raksasas as found in the Puranas and (v) the evolution of Agastya gotra.

BIRTH-STORY OF AGASTYA AND ITS INTERPRETATION

Several works[6] relate the story that once when Mitra and Varuna saw together the apsaras Urvasi, their passions were excited and their reproductive fluid fell into a jar out of which was born Agastya. Thus Agastya is regarded as the son of Mitra and Varuna, both being Vedic gods.

From this story, it has been made out that Agastya had a miraculous birth and a divine origin. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri apparently admitting that the story conveys a miraculous birth, comments that a miraculous birth is the natural concomitant of the life history of all distinguished and holy personages.[7] Sivaraja Pillai, too, admits that the birth of Agastya is rather mysterious.[8] Many other scholars also subscribe to the same view. Now it may be examined whether such an interpretation of the story is acceptable.

It is well known that ancient Indian literature abounds in traditions and stories similar to that of the birth of Agastya. For instance, Drona is described as having been born from a vessel in which the Rishi Bharadvaja's generative fluid was deposited when he acquired a sudden passion

6 For a detailed study refer *Rigveda,* VII, 33, 10-13; *Brhaddevata* V, 149-154 (Ed. & Tr. by A. A. Macdonell, Harvard Oriental Series, V & VI, 1904); Katyayana's *Sarvanukramani* and Shadgurusishya's commentary entitled *Vedarthadipika* I, 166 (ed. by A. A. Macdonell, 1886); Sayana's commentary on the *Rigveda* (VII) — see Rigveda Samhita with the commentary of Sayanacharya III, Vaidika Samshodhana Mandala, Poona, 1941; Yaska's *Nirukta,* V sec. 13; *Ramayana,* VII chap. 56 & 57; *Matsya Purana,* chap. 61; *Padma Purana,* V, chap. 22; *Narasimha Purana,* chap. 6; *Devi Bhagavatam* VI, chap. XIV, Sec. 53-59; also cf. *Manimekhalai,* XIII-94-96 (ed. with notes by V. Swaminatha Iyer, 1931).
In all these accounts Vasistha also is spoken of as having been born along with Agastya.

7 Agastya, *op. cit,* p. 473-474.

8 *op. cit.,* p. 2.

for Ghrtaci.[9] Another sage, Kripa, is stated as having been born from the generative fluid of the sage Saradwat (Gautama) which fell down on a clump of heath when he saw the apsaras Janapadi.[10] Bhrgu and Angiras were born as a result of Prajāpati's lust for his daughter.[11] Some rishis also are described as born in mysterious ways.[12] Besides there are references to brother-sister unions, as in the story of Yama and Yami.[13] All these accounts appear as too mythical and unbelievable but it is possible to discern in them some historical significance. One should not discard them on the ground that they disclose a too unethical standard to be true.[14] Ethical standards vary from time to time, place to place, and people to people. What appears to us as monstrously unethical might conceivably have been recognised as quite ethical in primitive times and in primitive communities. Moreover, it is generally recognised that considerable mixture between the Aryans and the pre-Aryans or non-Aryans must have taken place right from the times the former entered India, resulting in a fusion between the two races, their cultures and traditions.[15] The stories under consideration including the story of the birth of Agastya, perhaps convey memories of primitive cultures, and of the effects of the intermingling of the Aryan and pre-Aryan and non-Aryan elements of

---

9 *Mahabharata,* I, 121. v. 3-6 (ed. by V. S. Sukthanakar)

10 *MBH,* I, 130 cf. P. C. Roy's translation. I, pp. 266-267.

11 *Aitareya Brahmana,* III, 33-34. cf. Trans. by Martin Haug, II (1863) — for many more references to such examples of parental incest refer to S. C. Sarkar, *Some Aspects of the Earliest Social History of India* (1928), pp. 136-144.

12 See H. L. H. Hariyappa, Rigvedic Legends through the Ages, *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute,* XI, 1950-51.

13 *R.V.*, X, 10, also cf. S. C. Sarkar, *Ibid.*, pp. 116-135.

14 Hariyappa justifies the presence of such legends by stating that the ancient sastras have recognised such ethical aberrations as examples to be avoided only and never to be followed. cf. *ibid.*

15 S. K. Chatterji says: 'It is now becoming more and more clear that the non-Aryan contributed by far the greater portion in the fabric of Indian civilization, and a great deal of Indian religious and cultural traditions, of ancient legend and history is justly non-Aryan translated in terms of the Aryan speech — as it was the Aryan speech that became the dominant factor, although non-Aryan elements made very large inroads into its purity......a great deal of Puranic and epic myth, legend and semi-history is pre-Aryan" — *Indo-Aryan and Hindi,* (Eight Lectures) — Gujarat Vernacular Society, Ahmedabad 1942, pp. 31-32.

culture and traditions. The story of Urvasi being shared by Mitra and Varuna[16] finds an echo in the primitive system of polyandry, observed during the age of the Pandavas and even now observed by many of the existing aboriginal tribes.[17] Further the reference to the story of the birth of Agastya even in the Rigveda establishes the antiquity of the system.[18] In the process of fusion of the two traditions —Aryan and pre-Aryan or non-Aryan— the original significance of the account of the birth of Agastya was perhaps forgotten and instead a fanciful mystery was attached to it as in the Rigvedic account.

Etymological significance of the name Agastya

No clear and acceptable etymological derivation of the name Agastya appears in any of the literary accounts which refer to him. An explanation is however given in the *Ramayana*[19] which reads as : *agastya iti vikhyato loke sevenaiva karmana.* This explanation is far from clear, but it has been commented upon by Sri Govindaraja as : *svena karmana vindhyastham-bhanarupena agastya iti vikhyatah*

---

16 cf. S. C. Sarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 80 f n. 7 and p. 151 f.n. 4.

17 It is interesting to note that among the Bhotiyas of north Assam, Polyandry is a recognised institution cf. W. Crooke, *Natives of Northern India* (1907) p. 49.

The marriage customs of the Oraons and the Nagas for example are most primitive. The youths are supposed to sleep in a bachelor's hall ; but the intercourse of the sexes is practically unrestricted, ante-nuptial connections are the rule rather than the exception, and marriage, as they understand the term, is equivalent to cohabitation. " To call this state of things immoral ", says Risley, " is to apply a modern conception to primitive habits of life. Within the tribe (Oraons) indeed, the idea of sexual morality seems hardly to exist, and the unmarried Oraons are not far from the conditions of modified promiscuity which prevails among many of the Australian tribes. " cf. Crooke, *ibid.*, p. 77. Also refer to Verrier Elwin, *Myths of Middle India* (Oxford University Press, 1949).

18 Mention may be made of the view of D. D. Kosambi who says " It is clear that Vasistha and Agastya as being born from the urn, are giving a good Aryan translation of their birth from a pre-Aryan or non-Aryan mother-goddess. The effective change is from the absence of a father to the total denial of a mother, a good marxist anti-thesis necessitated by the transition from matriarchy to patriarchy." Urvasi and Pururavas, *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, New Series 27, Pt. I (1951) pp. 27-28. Also cf. his article "The Study of Ancient Indian Tradition ", *Indica*, Indian Historical Research Institute, Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume, Bombay, 1953.

19 III, 11, 81. Kumbakonam edition.

agam stambhayati iti agastya iti vyutpatteh. Here is an allusion to an exploit often attributed to Agastya in connection with his arresting the abnormal growth of the Vindhyas. In the *Vachaspatya*[20] the name Agastya is explained as *agam vindhyacalam sthyayati sthabhnati iti agastya.* According to most of the commentators[21] the name Agastya arose out of the tradition in regard to the suppression of the Vindhyas. This derivation cannot be accepted as the Vindhyas were unknown to the Sanskrit speaking Aryans of the Rigvedic period. The probability is that a non-Aryan name which had traditions associated with mountains was adopted as early as the Rigvedic times[22]. It is interesting to note here that Agastya is associated not only with the Vindhyas but also with some other mountains. In the *Bhagavata*[23] and *Matsya*[24] *Puranas,* Agastya is spoken of as a resident of Mount Malaya and as performing *tapas* seated therein. In one of the chapters of the *Vayu Purana*[25] (*bhuvanavinyasa*) Agastya's abode is located on the Mandara mountain in the Malayadvipa across the seas. Agastya's residence is also stated to be Mount Kunjara in Kerala.[26] According to Tamil literature, Agastya is associated with the Podiyil hill in South India.[27] The association of Agastya with mountains is in line with non-Aryan traditions relating to

---

20 Pt. I, compiled by Taranatha Taraka Vachaspati Calcutta, 1873, — the name Agasti which is regarded as an equivalent to Agastya is also derived as *agam vindhyacalam asayati iti agasti.*

21 cf. for example *The Namalinganusasana — Amarakosha of Amarasimha* with the commentary of Bhanuji Dikshit edited with notes by Pandit Sivadatta of Jeypur, 4th edn., Bombay, 1915 ; also Kshiraswamin's commentary on *Amarakosha,* Poona, 1913, p. 17. Refer also to Sir M. Monier Williams, *Sanskrit English Dictionary.* It is interesting it is shown in this dictionary that one of the names of Siva is Agastya.

22 It is admitted generally that some of the non-Aryan names were Sanskritised as for example the Minas were called in Sanskrit the Matsyas.

23 X, 79, 17 cf. V. R. R. Dikshitar, *Purana Index,* Vol. I.

24 61, 36-41.

25 cf. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Agastya, op. cit.,* p. 486.

26 Holtzmann, *Zeitschrift der Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* 34 (1880) p. 590. cf. K. A. N. Sastri, *op. cit.,* p. 478.

27 *Manimekhalai,* Canto I lines 1-5 ; *Silappadikaram* III 1, XII, XIV 14-15. also cf. *Imperial Gazetteer of India* V, New Edition, 1908, p. 71.

mountains.[28] The derivation of the name Agastya on the basis of his association with the Vindhyas may therefore be interpreted as a survival of the non-Aryan traditions.

AGASTYA AS ADEPT IN WITCHCRAFT

In the *Atharvaveda* Agastya is associated with witchcraft.[29] Even in the Rigveda a hymn reveals this association of Agastya with spells and charms.[30] Generally spells and charms are indicative of a primitive culture. It is very likely therefore that the association of Agastya with spells and charms goes back to primitive times and the references to them in the Vedic literature indicate their survival from pre-Aryan days.[31] It is significant that, many works on alchemy and medicine in Tamil are ascribed to Agastya, but the extant works are of relatively late origin. Many works on tantric literature are also attributed to him.[32] Agastya is also referred to as a hunter and archer,[33] indicating the primitive culture to which he belonged.

---

28 The importance attached to the mountains, the evolution of the worship of mountains and founding settlements on mountain tops — all these are ascribed generally to the non-Aryans. cf. Buddha Prakash, Govardhana Puja, Its Historical and Cultural Significance, *The Poona Orientalist*, XVIII, 1953, pp. 13-18.

W. Crooke points out that the non-Aryan aboriginal tribes of Central India worship the mountains and that the belief in the sanctity of mountains widely prevails among the non-Aryan or Dravidian races. He also cites particularly the respect paid to the Vindhya ranges. In his opinion the veneration for mountains in the minds of the early Aryans might be a survival from the beliefs of non-Aryan races. cf. Crooke, The Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India, I, 1896. pp. 60-65. Also cf. J. A. MacCulloch, Mountains, Mountain-Gods etc. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, VIII, pp. 863-868.

29 II, 32, 3 ; V, 23, 10. cf. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects.*

30 I, 191.

31 R. D. Banerji admits the early fusion of the Aryans and the non-Aryans and he writes that the non-Aryan magicians and the Dravidian priests became Brahmanas. cf. *Prehistoric, Ancient and Hindu India*, pp. 37-38. Pargiter points out that the original Brahmans were not so much priests as 'adepts' in matters supernatural, 'masters' of magico-religious force, wizards and medicine men. He also at the same time points out that Brahmanism originally was not an Aila or Aryan institution and that the earliest Brahmans were connected with the non-Aryan peoples and were established among them when the Ailas entered. cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 306-308.

32 cf. R. Shamasastry, A Theory on the Origin of the Devanagari Alphabet, *Indian Antiquary*, XXXV.

33 cf. H. Jacobi, Agastya, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, I, p. 181.

AGASTYAS AS RAKSASAS

In the *Vayu Purana*[34] Agastyas are classified as rakshasas along with Vaisvamitras and Paulastyas under the rule of Kubera. In the *Matsya Purana*[35] also, Agastyas are counted among the Brahmarakshasas and followers of Kubera. Rakshasas are not anywhere treated as Aryan. The writers of the Puranas were presumably aware of the association of the original Agastyas with some of the non-Aryan tribes :[36] Agastya is actually referred to as the son of Pulastya, who was the progenitor of tribes like the rakshasas.[37]

EVOLUTION OF AGASTYA GOTRA

Amongst the Brahmanic clans (gotras), there are eight main *gotra-kara* risis whose names are Visvamitra, Jamadagni, Bharadvaja, Gotama, Atri, Vasistha, Kasyapa and Agastya.[38] According to the Mahabharata, however, there were only four original *gotra-kara* risis, viz. — Bhrgu, Vasistha, Kasyapa and Angiras. This suggests that the Agastya gotra was accepted in the Brahminic fold only at a later date.[39] It may be mentioned here that according

---

34 Chap. 69, v. 195-196 ; Chap. 70, v. 53.

35 Chap. 121, v. 62.-63.

36 "Pulastya is said to be the father of Agastya and Visravas. Visravas had four sons, Kubera by Idavida (or Ilavila) and Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Vibhisana by Kesini. The saintly civilizer of Southern India, Agastya, is thus very closely indeed related to the chief of the hated raksasas, being in fact the uncle of Ravana, the god-despising king of Lanka. While Ravana conquered India and reduced the gods to abject subjection, from which they were only rescued by Visnu appearing as Balarama, his uncle Agastya waged war with the demons and advised Rama how to subdue the raksasas. Similarly family discords assisted Rama in his warfare against Ravana and Bali (Vali) whose respective brothers Vibhisana and Sugriva joined Rama." Gustav Oppert, *On the Original Inhabitants of Bharatavarsa or India* (1894) p. 87. Also cf. Pargiter, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-243.

37 *Vayu Purana*, Chap. 28 v. 22 ; *Vishnu Purana* ch. X ; *Markandeya Purana*, Canto LII, v 22-23 ; *Bhagavata Purana*, IV, 1.36.

38 cf. P. V. Kane, Gotra and Pravara in Vedic Literature, *JBBRAS*. XI, New Series ; C. V. Vaidya, Gotra and Pravara, *Proceedings and Transactions of the First Oriental Conference*, Poona, 1919, II. pp. 34-35, R. Fick, Gotras, *Enc. Re. E. Ethics*, VI, 1913, pp. 353-358.

39 Pargiter, as pointed out already, says that the Agastyas arose later and their origin is uncertain yet tradition connects them with the Deccan cf. *op. cit.*, p. 304.

to some scholars Brahmanic priesthood was itself a consequence of adoption by the Vedic Aryans of indigenous pre-Aryan priests.[40] One such family of pre-Aryan priests was presumably that of Agastya.[41]

---

40 cf. D. D. Kosambi, On the Origin of Brahmin Gotras, *JBBRAS*, New Series, XXVI. pp. 21-80; Also his article "Early Brahmins and Brahmanism *JBBRAS*, XXIII, pp. 39-46. Also Refer Pargiter, *op. cit.*, Ch. XXVI.

41 When Agastya 'nourished both colours' in Rigveda I, 179, 6 it cannot mean two castes but both Aryans and non-Aryans for he belonged to both and his hymns show clearly the character of the compromise cf. D. D. Kosambi, Urvasi and Pururavas, *op. cit.*, p. 30. Also cf. N. N. Ghosh, The Origin and Development of Caste System in India, *Indian Culture*, XII, p. 178.

The Period of Religious Revival in Tamil Literature

S. ARUMUGA MUDALIAR

A study of the religious revival during the Pallava reign will not merely help students of Tamil literature and history to have a glimpse of the trends of Tamil literature during the period but will also serve as an introduction and suitable background for a proper understanding and assessment of the development of Tamil Literature during the time of the later Cholas. Even a cursory study of the literary works during the period will reveal two significant features. Firstly, the literature of the period distinctly religious in character having arisen with the sole objective of invigorating the indigenous faiths of the land, namely, Saivism and Vaishnavism, which were in conflict with Buddhism and Jainism. Secondly the evidence is clear that the Pallava kings were generally more anxious to patronise Sanskrit culture than to support, at any rate actively, Tamil literature, learning and education. A study of the numerous Pallava inscriptions brings out the fact that not one inscription relates to grants to any Tamil Colleges or institution for fostering Tamil learning and education, whereas we find a number of inscriptions relating to the promotion of Sanskrit learning and education.

The period roughly from 600 to 900 A.D. of the Pallava rule may be described as the age of religious revival in the History of Tamil Literature. During the Sangam Age, the prevalence of a spirit of religious tolerance and the study of the different religions of the times in a philosophic and friendly spirit, reinforced and strengthened the feeling of universal brotherhood fostered by the large-hearted and

far-seeing policy of the Tamil kings.[1] The Saiva, Vaishnava, Buddhist, Jaina and other faiths flourished, all side by side in a peaceful and tolerant atmosphere, not merely in the big capital cities like புகார் Puka:r or காவிரிப்பூம்பட்டினம் Kaviripppu:mpat:t:inam காஞ்சிபுரம் Kanjipuram வஞ்சி Vanji and Ut:anthai or உறையூர் Ut:aiyu:r but also in rural areas. We have a large body of evidence attesting the existence side by side of temples of the gods of not merely the Saiva pantheon but also of Vishnu, Muruha, Bala De:va and Indra, and Jaina and Buddhist shrines and monasteries.[2] Religious toleration was an article of faith and not merely a matter of policy with the Tamil kings of the period and the kings made liberal grants to religious institutions, irrespective of their doctrinal affiliation. We come across Buddhist and Jain poets in the third Sangam.

But, after the Sangam age, there came an interval of literary quiescence for about three centuries, probably due to the Kalabra Interregnum. The adherents of Buddhist and Jain religions, who had hitherto been peaceful, began to adopt a policy of aggressive expansion at the expense of the indigenous Saiva and Vaishnava faiths. They spread rapidly in the South with settlements in Kanji, கொங்கு நாடு Kongu Na:du and மதுரை Madurai. Many of the Buddhists and Jains of the time were great Sanskrit scholars; and, while they learnt the language of the soil (Tamil), became scholars and writers in Tamil, they not only imported Buddhist and Jain ideas and ideologies into Tamil but were also responsible for a large influx of Sanskrit and Pali words, phrases and idioms into the Tamil Language. They gradually exercised a powerful influence on the kings and chieftains as well; in the hey-day of the Pallava rule in the early years of the 7th century their influence was at its zenith. King மகேந்திரவர்மன் Mahendra Varman

---

1 *Manimekalai* — Kathai 27.

2 (i) *Silappatikaram* — Kathai V. Lines 169 to 181.
(ii) *Ibid* — Kathai XIV, Lines 7 to 14.
(iii) *Ibid* — Kathai IX, Line 60.
(iv) *Ibid* — Kathai IX, Lines 9 to 13.

(600 — 630 A.D.) was himself a Jain and greatly encouraged Jainism. If the story of his persecution of திருநாவுக்கரசர் Thiruna:vukarasar[3] who reverted to Saivism from Jainism to which he had earlier become a convert is correct, it is an indication that conversions of Saivas and Vaishnavas to the Buddhist and Jain faiths were not uncommon. It is curious that this Jain king who persecuted Thiruna:vukkarasar or Appar was himself converted in turn to Saivism by the very same Appar.

The devotees of Siva and Vishnu viewed such conversions with consternation and horror and were anxious to check the spread of these alien faiths. It was at this time that the great Saivite and Vaishnavite saints came on the scene and while arresting the spread of the new faiths, strengthened and deepened their own faiths. Travelling from one place of pilgrimage to another with their followers and devotees, singing the praise of their Lords, Siva and Vishnu, these Saiva and Vaishnava Acharyas, popularly known as நாயன்மார் Na:yanma:rs and ஆழ்வார் A:l-va:rs spread the bhakti cult.[4]

---

3 (i) *Tirunavukkarasar Tevaram — Tiruvarur Palamoli Pattu* — Verse 10 — Last line — The term கரும்பிருக்க இரும்பு கடித்து எய்த்தவாறு is taken to mean a pathetic reference to his original faith of Saivism described as கரும்பு or sugarcane and adopting the foreign faith of Jainism described as இரும்பு or iron. In fact the terms கனி and காய் in verse 1 of this patikam, அறம் and மறம் in verse 3, விளக்கு and மின்மினி in verse 7, and தவம் and அவம் in verse 9 are taken to refer to these faiths only in turn.

(ii) *Ibid* — Tiruchenkkattankudi Patikam — Verse 4 last lines 3-4.

(iii) The following lines refer to his having been once a Jain and the peculiar habits and practices of the Jains some of which are no doubt exaggerated.

Ibid — Tiruvaiyaru Patikam — beginning with குண்டனாய்ச் சமணரோடு verses 7, 5, 4, 3, 2 & 1 and 8.

(iv) *Ibid* — Tiruppuhalur — Tirunerisai — Verse 4.

3-A *Tirunavukkarasar Tevaram* — Namaccivayattiruppatikam — Verse 1.

(ii) *Ibid* — Tirunanipalli Patikam — Verse 5 lines 3-4.

(iii) *Ibid* — Tirunilakkudi Patikam — Verse 7.

4 (i) Tirumalisai Alwar — Nanmukan Tiruvantati, Verse 6.

(ii) *Ibid.* Verse 14.

(iii) *Ibid.* Verse 26.

(iv) *Ibid.* Verse 84.

Thus arose the religious revival of the period ; and thus the Tamil works of the period happened to be mainly religious in tone, character and sentiment and propagated the Saivite and Vaishnavite doctrines of bhakti and mukti. It was a period of continuous feud and enmity among the votaries of the different faiths. The hymns of some of the Nayanmars and Alwars of this age make specific references to some kings,[5] personalities and incidents, which help us greatly in fixing their chronology.

THE:VA:RAM OF APPAR AND SAMBANDAR

The The:va:ram hymns sung by அப்பர் Appar, சம்பந்தர் Sambandar, and சுந்தரர் Sundarar in this period were collected and codified later by Nambiyandar Nambi (நம்பியாண்டார் நம்பி) into the first seven volumes of Saivite Tirumurais or sacred books ; Sambandar's hymns comprising the first three volumes, Appar's the next three and Sundarar's the seventh are in praise of Lord Siva and His divine attributes and are of exceeding elegance and sweetness. Unlike other literary works which betray the conscious efforts of their authors, these hymns evidence a spontaneous overflow of the religious zeal and love for God of these three Saivite saints. திருஞான சம்பந்தர் Tirunja:na Sambandar was originally known as ஆளுடைய பிள்ளை A:l:ut:aya Pil:l:ai (the child blessed with the Grace of the Lord.) Thirunavukkarasar was otherwise known as Appar and ஆளுடைய அரசர், the kingly person blessed with the

---

(v) The same Alwar — Santa viruttam — Verse 69.

(vi) *சாக்கியம் கற்றோம்.........பின் பழகிய. குரு பரம்பரை பக். 10.*

(vii) Tirunavukkarasar ஆதி புராணம் verse 2, 3, 7, 9 and innumerable places in his Tevaram describing Vishnu.

(viii) *Ibid.* இலிங்க புராணம் — Whole.

(ix) The 9th verse of all the Patikams of Sambandar describing Vishnu.

5 (i) Appar and his reference to King Mahendra Varman 600-630.

(ii) Sambandar and his reference to King Ankesari.

(iii) Sundarar and his reference to Kadavar Kon Kalarchingam.

(iv) Manikkavacakar and his reference to Varaguna II.

(v) Nammalvar and his reference to King Parantaka Nedunjadaiyan.

(vi) Tirumangai Alwar and his reference to Kings Nandi Varman and Vairamekan etc.

Grace of the Lord and Sundaramurthi as ஆளுடைய நம்பி the youth blessed with the Grace of the Lord. Their songs generally dealt with Lord Siva of the various temples, situated in the sacred places of the Tamilakam and even beyond திருக்கேதீச்சரம் like Thirukke:di:ccaram and திருக்கோணமாமலை Thirukko:n:ama:malai in Ceylon திருப்பருப்பதம்-ஸ்ரீசைலம் Thirupparupatham or Sri Sailam in the district of Kurnool and திருக்கைலாயம்-திருக்கேதாரம் Thirukkaila:yam or Mount Kailas and Tirukkedaram or the modern Kedarnath temple in the Himalayas, most of which these saints had actually visited. These songs were generally in the form of பதிகம் patikams, or sets of ten verses each ; the patikams of Sambandar and Sundarar contained eleven songs and, in the eleventh, it was their practice to mention their own name, as an indication of the authorship.

The The:va:rams of all the three saints are the manifestations of the popular bhakti cult in South India ; they stand superb not merely in point of melody and in their power of being set to music or பண் pan:, but also from the point of view of emotional expression, religious fervour and literary excellence. Like their counter-parts in Vaishnavism, the Alvars, these Tevaram authors appeared on the scene when the aggressive domination of Buddhism and Jainism in the Tamil land filled the Saivites with dismay and set out to assert the worth of their own faiths and thereby put an end to proselytising by alien faiths. Devoting their lives to the cause of their faiths, these Nayanmars and Alvars preached Bhakti or love for Lords Siva and Vishnu ; they are reported to have worked miracles with the help of their Gods and defeated the Buddhist and Jain missionaries in open religious discourses. Sambandar[6] condemns Jainism for its contemptuous attitude towards the vedas and vedic rites. Thirunavukkarasar often attacks Buddhists and Jains in a language of unusual pungency. It is strange that this saint, who was himself attracted to the Jain faith from Saivism once and who came back to

6. வேத வேள்வியை நிந்தை செய்துழலுவர்.

Saivism through the untiring effort and tenacious persuasion of his elder sister, should refer to the adherents of the Jain faith in somewhat unseemly[6-A] language. Thirunavukkarasar or Appar as he is popularly known, was the elder contemporary of Sambandar. Appar lived upto a ripe old age of 81. Apart from tradition, we have ample literary and epigraphic evidence for fixing his age ; these pieces of evidence cover the period from the last decades of the 6th century to the latter half of the 7th centuary A.D. i.e. during the reigns of Mahendra Varman I, the Pallava king (600-630) and நெடுமாறன் Neduma:tan, the Pandiyan king (670-710). According to Periyapuranam, Appar converted Mahendra Varman to Saivism. The king had persecuted him for having deserted Jainism and gone back to Saivism, but the miraculous powers by which he escaped the tortures to which he was subjected (references to which appear in Appar's own hymns[7]) apparently moved the king himself to embrace Saivism. The king embraced Saivism probably about 620 A.D. and then constructed a number of rock-cut temples for Siva at Vallam, Mahe:ndrava:di, Dalavanur, Si:yamangalam, Palla:varam etc., besides the rock-cut temple at Tiruccirappal:l:i, in which are found two of his inscriptions[7-A]. These record that the king Gun:abhara constructed a temple on the top of the mountain and installed therein a linga and a statue of himself and include a prayer for long life to the king Gun:abhara, who returned from 'Vibaksha Vrutti' or hostile conduct through the Grace of the Linga. Vibaksha Vrutti evidently refers to the king's initial adherence to Jainism. குணபரன் Gun:abhara is one of the titles occurring in the inscriptions of Mahendra Varman. Periyapuranam affords literary evidence in support. It states that the Pallava king of the times built a temple for Siva at Tiruvadikai called 'Guna-

6-A (i) Tirunavukkarasar Tevaram Tiruvaiyaru Patikam — All the 10 verses.
(ii) *Ibid* — Tirupalayarai Patikam — Verse 1-9.
(iii) *Ibid* — Tiruvarur Palamoli — Verse 1, 3, 8.
(iv) *Ibid* — Tirutturutti Tirunerisai — Verse 9.
7 Vide 3-A supra.
7-A 5 I. I. Vol. I No. 33 — Page 29.

dhare: ccuram '.[8] Evidently it ought to be 'Gunabhare:-ccuram', the i: ccuram or Siva temple built by Gun: abhara.

Appar was the elder contemporary, as we have seen, of Sambandar, with whom he had stayed and travelled now and then.[9] Along with Sambandar, he met some of his (Sambandar's) other devotees and friends like சிறுத்தொண்டர் Situtton: dar, முருகர் Muruhar and நீல நக்கர் Ni: la Nakkar. Siruttondar was the Commander-in-Chief of King Paramesvara Varman I during the Pallava invasion of the Chalukyan territory and the storming of Vatapi the Chalukyan capital and Appar might therefore have met him about 677 A.D.

When Thirunavukkarasar was a Jain, he was acclaimed as a leader of the Jainas, as he was well versed in the Jaina tenets. In fact, the king gave him the title of தரும சேனர் 'Dharmase: na'[10]. The time of re-conversion to Saivism may probably have been about 620.

Sometime after re-embracing Saivism he is reported to have met the boy-saint Sambandar at சீகாழி Si: ka: l-i just after the latter's holy-thread investiture at about the age of seven. Sambandar was anxious to meet Tirunavukkarasar, who had withstood triumphantly through the Grace of Lord Siva, the persecutions of the Pallava king, Mahendra I; Tirunavukkarasar was equally anxious to meet the famous boy-saint, who was blessed with the Lord's Grace when he was only three years old. Assuming that Sambandar met the Commander-in-Chief of Parame: svara Varman I somewhere in 677 in his thirteenth year, he had probably met Tirunavukkarasar for the first time a few years earlier. Tirunavukkarasar was, according to Periyapuranam, old enough at the time of his meeting Sambandar first at Sikali, to be called by him in veneration and awe as

---

8 *Periyapuranam* — Tirunavukkarasar Puranam — Verse 146.
9 *Ibid* — Verses 152, 187, 231, 34, 267, 396, 397, 250-60.
10 *Periyapuranam* — Tirunavukkarasar Puranam — Verse 39.

'Appar'[11] or father. He was already showing signs[12] of old age; probably he was looking older than his real age due to the suffering he had undergone as a result of persecution by the Jain king. The account of his life in Periyapuranam indicates that a number of years must have elapsed between their first meeting in Sikali and the death of Appar. By comparing the incidents of his life with those of Sambandar, we are able to arrive at some clear chronological sequences. If we presume, that Appar was about 75 years in 671 when he first met Sambandar and allowing about 6 years for the pilgrimages he made before his last days, he died probably in 677. In this period (from 671 to 677) he met also Nedumaran[13], the Pandiyan king, the கூன் பாண்டியன் Ku:n Pa:n:t:iyan who was converted to Saivism by Sambandar. Accepting the tradition[13-A] that Appar lived to the age of 81, we may roughly fix his period as 596 to 677 A.D.

Sambandar, the "precocious Saiva saint" was born at Sikali (the taluk headquarters of that name in the Tanjore District).[14] His parents were சிவபாத இருதயர் Sivapa:da Hirudayar and பகவதியார் Bagavathiya:r. They were both great devotees of Siva. Sambandar is said to have been fed by Goddess பார்வதி Pa:rvathi (consort of Siva) herself, who gave him her own milk, when he was crying of hunger, on the banks of the tank near the local Siva temple, where his father who had taken him there was bathing.[15] Having drunk the holy milk of divine wisdom, he became known as Tirunjnana Sambanda (*lit.* one related to divine knowledge); the child was also called ஆளுடைய பிள்ளை A:l:ut:aiya Pil:l:ai the child that received the grace of God. From then on he began to pour forth sweet melodious hymns on Siva; these are spontaneous expressions of the saint's inmost experience

---

11 *Ibid* — Verse 182.
12 *Ibid* — Tirugnanasambandar Puranam — Verse 270.
13 *Ibid* — Tirunavukkarasar Puranam — Verse 405.
13-A Srinivasa Pillai Tamil Varalaru Part II — p. 68.
14 *Ibid.* Tirugnanasambandar Puranam — Verse 14-15.
15 *Ibid.* Verse 67-68.

in praise of Lord Siva and his Grace. The first[16] pathikam contains the songs sung in reply to his father's demand for an explanation of the cup of milk in his hand, out of which he was drinking.

This miracle is reported to have taken place in the third year of his life. After his sacred thread-wearing ceremony, which is usually done at the age of seven, Sambandar met Thirunàvukkarasar, whose fame had already reached him.

After a short sojourn at Sikali[17] with Thirunavukkarasar whom he called அப்பர் "Appar" (father), Sambandar went on a pilgrimage to the Siva shrines of the Chola country, visiting more than 100 temples. With the difficulty of transport existing in those distant days, travel, especially with hundreds of devotees following the saint, was probably very slow. We will not be wide of the mark if we allow five to six years for completion of this Chola-nadu pilgrimage ; he finally reached திருச்செங்காட்டங்குடி Tiruccenka: t: t: tangudi,[18] the native place of பரஞ்சோதி Paranjo: thi popularly known as Siruttondar, who received Sambandar with all respect and honour and entertained him. Sambandar in turn honoured him by recording Siruttondar's devoted service to Lord Siva in his patikam[19] in praise of the lord of the local temple.

Siruttondar, according to historians, happened to be the commander-in-chief of the then Pallava king Narasimha Varman I (630-688). The northern contemporaries of this king were King Pulakesin II of the Chalukyas whose capital was at Vatapi and King Harshavardhana of Kanauj. Narasimha Varman invaded the western Chalukyan kingdom and laid waste its capital Vatapi in 642 and erected

16 Tirugnanasambandar Tevaram — Tiruppiramapura Patikam.
17 (i) Vide 9 — V. 182-187.
(ii) Vide 9.
18 (i) *Periyapuranam* — Tirugnanasambandar Puranam V. 468-70.
(ii) *Ibid* — Siruttondanayanar Puranam V. 23.
19 (i) *Ibid* 420 and
(ii) Sambandar Tevaram — Tiruccenkattankudi Patikam V. 1-10.

a pillar of victory. According to Periapuranam,[20] Siruttondar went on an expedition to the north as the commander-in-chief of this army and brought home to his king, an enormous booty. After this heroic battle, he retired from official duties and devoted himself to the service of Lord Siva in his native village ; it was at this time that Sambandar paid him a visit.[21]

At the time of this visit Siruttondar had a child named சீராள தேவர் Sira:l:a De:var of three years of age.[22] Allowing, say, three years between Siruttondar's return from the war and the birth of the child, we can assume 648 as the year of this meeting. From this Siruttondar—Vatapi synchronism, the age of Thirunjna:na Sambandar has been fixed round about 642 by historians.

At the time of his meeting Appar for the first time at Sikali, just after his sacred thread-wearing ceremony, Sambandar was probably seven years of age and allowing six years for his pilgrimage as explained earlier, he would have been about 13 years of age when he met Siruttondar at his birth place in 648. After a short tour of Saivite shrines from this place in the company of Appar, Sambandar at the invitation of the Pandiyan queen[23] மங்கையர்க்கரசியார் Mangaiyarkkarasiya:r (The Queen among women) and the Pandiyan Prime Minister குலச்சிறையார் Kulaccitaiya:r went to the Pandiyan country. The Pandiyan king Nedumaran alias கூன்பாண்டியன் Kun Pandiyan —the hunch-backed Pandiyan had at this time renounced his Saivite faith and embraced Jainism ; many of his followers and subjects presumably followed suit. This caused great anxiety and concern to the queen and it was with this purpose that they sent out an invitation to Sambandar to tour the Pandiyan kingdom. Sambandar readily accepted the invitation and went to

20 *Periyapuranam* — Siruttondar Puranam — V. 6.
21 *Ibid* — V. 8-11.
22 *Ibid* — V. 17 & 22.
23 *Periyapuranam* — Tirugnanasambandar Puranam 603-616.

Madurai, the Pandiyan capital, where he was received with great respect and enthusiasm[24] by the chief minister himself. The Jainas of the place attempted to kill him by setting fire to his residence, but fortunately he survived this attempt. The queen visited him[25] after this incident. In the religious disputations between the two sides, the Jainas[26] on the one side and Sambandar on the other, the latter came out victorious and the king, who was suffering from a severe illness, was also cured by Sambandar. Thereupon the king re-embraced[27] his original faith, Saivism.

Leaving Madurai for a while, the saint went on a further tour in the Tamil Nad. Considering the number of places he visited, we may surmise that this tour lasted about 3 years. He was then probably 16 and married, as that was the traditional age for marriage in those days. On the day of the marriage, Sambandar is believed to have attained salvation along with his bride at the very altar of the marriage. This accords with the tradition according to which he lived for 16 years.[28]

Thus according to the historians, who base their arguments on the contemporaneity of Siruttondar and Sambandar, Sambandar lived around 642 and if he had, as we have shown before, met Siruttondar at the age of thirteen somewhere about 648 A.D., he married in say, 651. His date would thus be 635 to 651 A.D.

We are confronted however with the difficulty of reconciling the contemporaneity of Sambandar and Siruttondar (648) with the other contemporaneity of Sambandar with the Pandiyan king Nedumaran, whom he converted to Saivism. Prof. Nilakanta Sastri identifies this Nedumaran with Arike:sari Para:nkusa Ma:tavarman,[29] the

---

24 *Ibid* — 655-659.
25 *Ibid* — 725-28.
26 *Ibid* — 770.
27 *Ibid* — 810.
28 *Tamil Varalaru* — Srinivasa Pillai Part II p. 68.
29 *Pandiyan kingdom* — p. 53 et seq.

4th king of the First Pandiyan empire according to the Ve:l:vikkudi grant and the 1st according to the larger Sinnamanu:r plates. He is said to have reigned from 670-710 A.D. If it was indeed this king, who was converted to Saivism by Sambandar, then Sambandar must have lived even beyond 651, i.e., during the period of 670 to 710 A.D.

This conflict in dates cannot be explained satisfactorily unless either (i) Sambandar actually lived for a much longer period than 16 years, i.e., up to between 670-710 A.D., which makes it possible for him to have been the contemporary of both Siruttondar and Nedumaran, or (ii) Siruttondar led an expedition on Vatapi twice, the second one being between 670-710 A.D., and that he retired to a religious life after this second expedition. As for literary evidence for this later raid, we may take the stanza in Periyapuranam's account of Siruttondar mentioned before, to mean not the raid during Narasimha Varman's reign, but the one during his successor Paramesvara Varman's reign. For, in the stanza[30] under reference, neither Narasimha Varman, whose commander Siruttondar has been assumed to be, nor the year 642 A.D. are specifically mentioned. It merely contains the word மன்னவன் Mannavan and வாதாபித் தொன்னகரம் Vatha:pittonnakaram without the date. Mannavan merely means the king and Vatapittonnakaram means the old city of Vatapi.

Narasimha Varman was called in his inscriptions[31] வாதாபிகொண்ட நரசிம்மவர்மன் 'Vatha:pi Kont:a Narasimha Varman'—he who took Vatapi—and this is clearly an indication of his having stormed the city of Vatapi. Somewhere about the closing years of his father's reign, Pulikesin II advanced as far south as the capital of the Pallavas, forcing the Pallava king to retreat behind the wall of

30 Vide 21.
31 (i) Epigraphica Indica Vol. VI. P. 11
(ii) Indian Antiquary Vol. VIII. P. 275-276.
(iii) S. I. I. Vol. I. P. 114 and 152.
(iv) Salem Manual Vol. II. P. 356.

Ka:nji. Subsequently, we learn from the Ku:ram plates of Paramesvara Varman that Narasimha Varman inflicted a crushing defeat on Pulikesin in the battles of Man:imangala, Periya:la and Su:rama:ra. Shortly after the repulse of the Chalukyan armies from the neighbourhood of Kanji, Narasimha Varman prepared for a counter invasion of the Chalukyan territory presumably under the command of Paranjoti alias Siruttondar. The victorious march of the commander and his successful assault on the capital of Vatapi which has been identified with the modern Badami in the Bijapur District, are facts of history. The Velu:rpa:l:ayam[32] plates of Nandi Varman III and the mutilated inscription at Vatapi[33] refer to Narasimha Varman's victory over his enemies and his capture of " the Pillar of Victory standing in the centre of Vatapi ".

The question is whether there was a second raid of Vatapi by his successor Parame:svara Varman I (670-685 A.D.) and whether Siruttondar continued as his commander and undertook this second raid also, somewhere about 671 A.D., i.e., when Arike:sari Nedumaran, the 'Ku:n Pa:ndiya', was cured of his malady by Sambandar and was thereby converted to the Saiva faith. If we can establish that there was a second raid of Vatapi by Siruttondar, the meeting of (i) Sambandar and Siruttondar and (ii) Sambandar and Nedumaran the Pandiyan king (670-710 A.D.) were both possible. In that event, after his return to his village after the second expedition in 670 A.D., Siruttondar met Sambandar some six years later, i.e., about 677 A.D. in his 13th year. In this view, the period of Sambandar would be between 664 and 680 A.D.

Considering the inimical relations which persisted between the Pallava king Paramesvara Varman and his Chalukyan contemporary Vikrama:ditya I, the possibility of a second assault on Vatapi cannot be dismissed. Accord-

---

32 S.I.I. Vol. II. P. 511. Verse 11.
33 Indian Antiquary Vol. IX. P. 199.

ing to the Godval plates,[34] Vikramaditya conquered Kanjipura and went as far south as Ugrapura on the southern bank of the river Kaveri, identifiable with modern உறையூர் Utaiyu:r (a suburb of Tiruchirapalli) which was the capital of the Cholas during the Sangam days. According to Kielhorn[35] and Dr. Fleet, the year of Vikramaditya's encampment at Ugrapura was 674 A.D. Both the Kuram records and the Velurpalayam plates[36] refer to the rout of the enemy by the Pallava king though no details are furnished. On the other hand the Udayendram plates[37] of Nandi Varman Pallava Malla mention the site of the battle as Peruval:anallu:r about 16 miles north-east of Tiruchirapalli in the Lalgudi Taluk. High praise of the valour of Paramesvara Varman's men in the struggle with the enemy is given by the Kuram plates, from which we understand that the Pallava king's war elephant and his steed were called Arivarana and Atisaya respectively. As on the earlier occasion in 642 when Narasimha Varman pursued the retreating Pulike:sin to his very capital, it is not improbable that in 674 A.D. Parame:svara Varman pursued the retreating Vikrama:ditya as far as Vatapi and raided it. In an inscription of Parame:svara Varman in the Kailasana:thar Koil at Ka:njipuram, he is described as "Ugradandar, who destroyed the city of 'Rana Rasika'."[38] The surname ரணரசிகன் 'Ranarasika' is enjoined by Vikrama:ditya and the term "City of Ranarasika" obviously refers to Vatapi. In an article on the subject,[39] Venkataramanaiya comes to the same conclusion, i.e., that Vatapi was attacked a second time. In an article on Kodumbalur Vellirs, A. Rangaswami Saraswathi[40] establishes that Vatapi was totally destroyed by the Pallavas during a second attack in the reign of Paramesvara Varman.

---

34 Epigraphica Indica Vol. X No. 22. P. 100-6.
35 R. Gopalan. Pallavas of Kanchi. P. 105.
36 (i) S.I.I. Vol. I. P. 144 and 152.
(ii) S.I.I. Vol. II. P. 511. Verse 12.
37 S.I.I. Vol. II. P. 371.
38 *Alwarkal Kula Nilai* by M. R. Iyengar (1931) P. 108.
39 Christian College Magazine 1927 — P. 236-247.
40 Vizianagaram College Magazine 1930-31.

It would be worth while investigating whether epigraphical and other historical evidence could be found to support this hypothesis of a second attack on Vatapi by Siruttondar, as the other alternative is to discard the tradition which gives the age of Sambandar as 16 years and admit the probability of his having lived at least another twenty years.

Nakkiirar the Earliest Tamil Mystic

T. P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAM

Nakkiirar or Kiirar the Great is considered to be a poet of the *Sangam* or the Tamil Academy of Ancient Madurai of the earlier centuries of the Christian Era. He is the reputed author of a famous Tamil poem *Tiru-Murukar-ruppatai,* found included in the old Anthology of Ten Idylls, and later in the Eleventh Book of Saivism. This XIth Book consists, preponderatingly of Pre-Tevaram Poems (if Nampiantaar's Poems are omitted), collected in the Tenth century, under the patronage of the *Colas,* long after the religious revival of the Saivite Naayanmaars and the Vaisnavite Aalvaars. Even if this tradition is not true, for others suggest a later age and differentiate the author of this poem from the Sangam poet of the same name, the poem on all sides is admitted to be anterior to Tevaram and other Saivite works. Therefore one will be justified in claiming Nakkiirar as the earliest known Mystic of Tamil Land.

Very little is known about the author except that he was in the court of the great Pandiya King Netunceḷiya, the Victor of Talaiyālam Kānam. As hinted by the prefix Na (Great), he was one of the best poets of the Sangam. Apart from the Sangam poems, he is according to tradition, the author of a commentary on a treatise on Love Poetry in Tamil by Iṟaiyaṉār, identified with Siva Himself and in this he brings out the significance of Love. Perhaps this commentator is a different person.

Various anecdotes, however, have grown round his name. Once a Pandiya, it is said, suddenly when all alone with his queen experienced a waft of a new fragrance and he announced a rich prize for the poet solving his mental

puzzle. The then priest of the Madurai temple, a bachelor and a brahmin, always praying to God for money for his marriage, received a poem from the Lord, to be handed over to the Pandiya for winning the prize. The poem is, a rhetorical interrogation to a bee, by a lover, praising his lady-love : " Is there a sweeter fragrance of flowers than that of these tresses of hair ? "

The Pandiya was convinced that the sweet smell came from the queen's lock of hair. But Nakkīrar disputed this fact. Siva Himself had to come in the form of an old brahmin, but Nakkīrar intoxicated by his own power of debate, refused to yield even when the Lord hinted at His identity by opening the third eye of His. Nakkīrar was cursed and became a leper, but by singing the praises of Siva at Kalahasti he became whole. But this poem and others though attributed to a poet of the same name really belong to a later date. The identity of the name has led to this confusion.

There is another anecdote about the composition of the poem Tiru-Murukāṟṟuppaṭai. Nakkīrar entered once a magic area of an evil spirit or a wizard, who imprisoned one after another 99 people and waited for the 100th one for the final ritualistic slaughter of all. There was an enchanted tank into which if a leaf fell, the portion in the water became a fish. Nakkīrar, whilst performing his worship, saw this wonder and forgot his pūja. The wizard, as was usual with him, took this opportunity to bring Nakkīrar under his control and to imprison him with joy, born of the feeling of certainty that his ritual could be performed the very next day. The other 99 cursed Nakkīrar for his coming to seal their fate so soon. Nakkīrar thereupon composed this poem and Muruka released them all from the cave and the evil spirit.

In Tiru-Murukāṟṟuppaṭai, 'Tiru' like the Sanskrit word 'Sri' is a prefix, usually added to the name of any sacred thing, place or book. Āaṟṟuppaṭai is the name of a

variety of literary composition; it literally means "to send or guide one on the right path"; it may be translated as The Guide. This *art-motif* usually has its starting point, in the casual meeting of a starving and neglected artist made more miserable by the necessity of his supporting a beautiful artist of a wife and dependent followers, on the way in a desert, and under the scorching midday sun of summer by another artist, returning from his patron with all pomp and grandeur. This happy artist, out of pity and out of reverence for the greater art of the poorer one, narrates how he had been to the patron, how the kind and loving lord of great valour and power became a slave to art and gave a royal welcome to the artist, who was equally poor before and how the patron overwhelmed him with worthy praises and rich prizes, with precious mementoes of his love and regard, bringing about thereby a veritable metamorphosis, which is now seen and wondered by all. He then as a guide describes the way one has to pass through to the place of the lord, emphasising the variety of Nature and human life, each getting its particular shape and colour from the other, all finally harmonised by the ever watchful rule of the patron, into a living peace and growing culture which seem to shine in every heart and every place. The Geographic Motif—both physical and human—vivified by the patron's true love of real art, is predominant in this kind of Poetry. It starts thus with a contrast between the patronised art and the patronless art, between the poverty of the artist and the majesty of art, between wealth and poverty and ends in the disappearance of this contrast in the presence of the patron who thus restores harmony in the heart of the artist, even as he had everywhere else in his land, through which passed the artist, as though as on various rungs of the ladder of peace and communion.

Such poems as these were named after the particular artist concerned — The Bard, the Dancer, the Actor or the Poet. Such was the individuality of the art which no artist will willingly lose. Nakkīrar a poet himself but with a

mystic vision, revolts as it were, from this egoism of art, and dissolves all arts into a greater art of harmony, where all activities and vibrations go to form a real orchestra. Nakkīrar adopts and adapts this very art motif for expressing his vision. He guides us to *God* the Absolute. All are equal before Him and there is nothing to differentiate amongst us, as artists of life in the divine presence. This poem, therefore, cannot be named after any particular or general art. To differentiate his poem from others of its ilk, the poet calls it after its specific goal — God. This breaking away from the tradition, brings out clearly the universal point of view of our poet. God is named Muruku by the poet. This reminds us of the earliest known popular deity of Tamils, which a later generation has identified with Subrahmanya. Writing, as he does, in the Tamil country and in Tamil, this is but natural ; but the implication of his description of God is indeed universal. The Ancient Dravidian God has been known as Murukan in the masculine gender. Our poet however, uses the abstract form of that word, *Muruku* — without the masculine suffix reminding us there of the *It.* — The Absolute. This word Muruku means honey, beauty, fragrance, divine music, the magnetic touch of youth and eternity, all combining to denote the divinity underneath all these pleasures. This name as signifying the eternal feast, to the eye of the colour and form, to the ear of the music of harmony, to the nose of the charming aroma, and to the body, of the magic touch, is appropriate enough, when the poet tries to turn, the attention of the worldly, hankering after pleasure, inward to the fundamental basis of all their varied goals — the Eternal Divine Bliss. The Bliss of Truth and Knowledge, arising from at-one-ment or submission to His will, as opposed to the ephemeral and illusory self delusions, in this world of ignorance, death and misery.

The poet, true to his art-motif, begins with a contrast— the contrast inherent in the experience of the world as a partial — the natural duality of the world — light and dark-

ness—eternal and blissful, innocent and loving beauty, and mortal and miserable, sinful and avenging ugliness. First he starts with natural forces passing on from there to the world of life. The rising sun on the blue sea, welcomed and praised by all, for instance after a pitch dark night when one has lost his way, in a dense forest on a steep mountain, is a symbol of the light of the Divine, however one may fret later on in his burning heat. Darkness is itself divine which supervenes when after the heat and summer, the winter clouds cover the very passage of the piercing sun and with a down-pour of fresh rain, and make the whole world cool after the heat, to smell sweet with new blooms, and there we move blindly, in that darkness with life pulsating within and without, finding our way only with our hands. Even the beautiful colour of the flowers, blooming with happiness in the showers, and drawing us to themselves through their sweet fragrance, become invisible like God, in that darkness, but remain there only to be felt and enjoyed with an inner light. Lo! we touch the sphere like flowers! Aye! they are the flowers of His Garland. Divinity is thus revealed in this darkness.

The world of life blossoms on this mountain as the bliss of the care-free divine virgins of innocence, full of youth and beauty, each adorning the other in a spirit of self sacrifice and self dedication to service unto others as their prayer and worship and all of them dancing in unison with their song, praising the Lord, in a beauty spot on the mountain crest. As a contrast, comes the solo dance of the demoness —a mass of bone and living matter with a plateau-like belly, with sunken and lifeless but ever whirling eyes, with owl-bedecked cavelike ears, with disordered teeth masticating the fatty flesh of the corpse, carrying a grinning skull from which she scoops out an eye to feast upon, she moves heavily along and dances frightfully on the battlefield of dead, to the clapping of her arms against her ribs, in the name of God. She dances in exultation over her

success in clearing the dead and putrifying matter, from the battle-field where topsy-turvy egoism or evil was hewed down by the good God, so that the soul thus transformed, may live for ever-after this so called metamorphosis, as the very bedrock of divinity — the so called peacock of the Lord. Even as the atmosphere cleanses dead matter and makes further growth possible in very death, the demoness symbolises in a way, this kind service to God. The inevitable ugliness is but the deceiving first appearance of the principle of scavenging and surgery in this world. But for her, how can one live amidst corpses ? Therefore, her praise of the Lord is sincere and divine.

In these descriptions themselves, the contradictions are resolved in the harmony of the Lord — an inevitable harmony of such contradictions, as to be welcomed and enjoyed — no more abhorred or feared.

The poet exclaims " If you are to reach this harmony of his feet, you have only to feel a love for it ". " If it is everywhere, what more should one do ". " Let your resistance cease." The poet assures us : " you achieve your purpose this very minute ! "

True to his art-motif, he takes the man hankering after peace and harmony, from the crowded and busy Madurai, his native place, the proud city of invincible ramparts of war and rich markets of trade, to the serene and calm, cool and holy height of the mountain nearby, rising amidst humble rural surroundings. Here he suggests in a beautiful way, the pilgrim's progress, in his description of a bee hankering after honey, getting imprisoned in a small flower in the slushy field in the evening, but getting released at dawn, to fly up to the Divine Spring at the mountain top.

The poet moves south to Tiruccentur on the Tinnevelly coast. There he points as a guide to the form of *Muruka* with six faces rushing forward on an elephant to help his followers. Here the poet sees in this, the *Visva Rupa,* the whole universe deified and appearing as a beautiful youth.

The meaningless mass of dead but powerful matter becomes in His presence a divine vehicle, full of adornment and joy, order and rhythm, bringing God Himself to us. God's face reminds us of the full moon and His ear-rings of the stars. His crown is a harmony of all the geometrical shapes. The various activities or phases of the world, and these are six —the physical phenomena—the social life—the conventions and rule, the war—the family — and the path of divine knowledge—are but his varied faces. He is like a diamond with six facets. He has naturally twelve hands — two hands for expressive instruments of activity corresponding to each face. The Lord hurries to the needful with the flare of trumpets of the hollow bamboo of the mountains and the conches of the sky and with the resounding drum of the thunder.

From the South, the poet turns northwards and westwards to the Āī country of the Palani Hills. Milton brings all the gods and goddesses of other faiths inside his pandemonium as allies of Satan. Nakkiirar, however, brings the divine beings of his puranas to the Palani Hills, to the God as their *eternal child* for the release of the Creative Principle, till now imprisoned because of its self-adoring and self-conceited arrogance, intoxicated by the rhythm of its song but ignorant of its meaning, neglecting the innocence and beauty of the child where hovers divinity and where alone is unselfish and unbiased enjoyment of creative activity. They all go in a procession headed by the emaciated saints, and the loving couples of charming harp, their bodies and minds mellowed by music, along with the incarnations of the Principles of Destruction, powerful Protection and ambitious but Divine Rulership in the middle of the whole array of divine life, all these shining like stars, moving like the rushing wind, powerful like the fire with a tone and emphasis like ominous thunder. This procession so full of colour, light and shade, so full of life and energy, so full of pomp and power, viewed from a proper perspective is worthy of a divine painter, though

true to mystic poetry, brings to sharp focus the grandeur and glory of the puranas as seen and realised by our poet.

The poet moves westwards to the western ghats to Ērakam where he sees the Brahmins remaining celibate upto their 48th year, going to the temple in their pure wet cloth, straight from their holy bath, to their worship, praying there to God with their hands clasped up above their heads, muttering Mantras of His name and carrying sweet scented flowers to Him.

From there almost near the western sea — the Arabian Sea — our poet takes us according to his principle of universalism — round the world seeing the vision of God on every mountain top of the whole world — every mountain rising as a veritable temple before his holy eyes. There everywhere arises the vision of the mountain lasses dancing to their drum and music, in a circle with the Lord taking as many forms as there are these girls and with each form standing in between every two of them, appearing thus everywhere they see, to their right and to their left, clasping every one of their hands and dancing with them all in that enchanted circle. This represents the dance of the souls beloved of the Lord each in the embrace of the lover, reminding us of the '*rasa lila*' of Gopis and Krishna.

The poet returns back after this vision seen all round the world to Palamutir Colai — believed to be the modern Alagar Hills of Madurai. Everywhere to the poet, man appears as feeling for the sublime, as overcome by a reverence for something beyond his knowledge and power, for which there is something in him yearning, and where his ego is lost in the overwhelming flood of love and light, power and glory, bliss and beauty. Therefore, there is true worship everywhere whether in the dark forest or the colourful garden, in the flooding rivers or the stored up tanks, in the lovely islands in the river, in the crowded junction of roads or in the common meeting places in the open, in the trees or the posts.

Various kinds of worship — the Brahmin worship, the puranic worship, the worship of the Visvarupa, the worship of mystic love and dance, the worship of the aspiring pilgrim — the worship in the sublime and beautiful spots of Nature, in places where men congregate, worship of any symbol, living or material,—have been hinted. In all these places one may not miss the real spirit ; but worship takes many forms, sometimes the form of a blood-curdling devil dance of a mountain girl, revelling in the slaughter of a bull and its hot streaming blood, besmearing things in that blood, adorning the whole place with garlands of blood-like flowers, and with rising and whirling incense, burning red-like blood and beating the terrific gong ; yet even there, there is the loss of the Ego ; conciousness — sleeps like feigning death—wakes up then and there into the eternal presence of the Lord as though " on the lap of the mother " with no more care or thought of this body or the world, all drowned with the soul in the surging waves of the infinite ocean of love. This worship from an unexpected quarter — perhaps primitive and barbaric to modern eyes — is one with the holiest of the holiest, in its slaughter of the ego and in its dance thereon. It is the inner feeling and not the social aspect that is emphasised, for, here society and world are non-existent, in this trance of the mountain lass. The contrast between the outer horror and the inner calm is so much as to bring forth in this vision the poetic message of the mystic, of harmony of all worships. Mystics seem to take pleasure in such out of the way — cruel — horrid and obscene things so as to make these the vehicles of their inexpressible message — a kind of a secret code, as it were ; to be understood only by those who will not run away from this language. The mountain lass — a simpleton — brings back unto us God Himself ; she is a Guide unto the Lord when she loses her ego in Him — on his eternal search for the loving souls — not a mere guide to the pilgrim in his progress. This is her *Murukārruppatai* — guiding God to us—a beautiful phrase which because of this depth, taking us to the climax of the poem, has become the very name

of the poem. This interpretation is in keeping with the poetic spirit, though the interpretation given at the beginning of this essay may also be working in the mind of the poet.

Thus God is present everywhere. " Whenever and wherever this realisation occurs, bow down in humility " advises the poet " losing your ego and praise him as well as you can ". Here comes a harmony of the puranas and folklore whose gods and goddesses are Father and the Mother of this supreme ideal. The poet continues " The God of all forms — the Warrior, the Learned, the Wise, the Big, the Absolute, the Inner Moving Principle, The Great and the Lover, reveals himself to you the artist as Eternal Beauty and Love, Light and Youth and not in other Terrific Forms. He knows you had come. He showers his blessings then and there and makes you the Absolute, the One in the whole universe ".

The poem closes with a description of the cataract rushing down from the top of the Alagar Hills — suggesting the onrush of divine Grace—something like the seemingly mad pursuit of the hound of heavens — in whose presence the souls, not well attuned to it, as beasts and birds, scream and flee away, even when It brings the very riches and feasts they hanker after. But the cataract ever keeps on rushing at them.

This is the poetic vision of the mystic saint, explaining the contradictions of the world and this life by taking them to their very source, where these are resolved into the eternal and rich harmony, where all puranas, all legends, all gods and goddesses, all kinds of worship, and all activities become one symphony, where, if only we pine for it — our shrieks and laughters of life cease to be jarring notes but become the very melody of the song divine, from which wells forth — a flood of bliss, submerging us all, the seeming arc revealing itself in reality as an infinite circle of ever rushing cataract.

Early Tamil Cultural Influences in South East Asia

S. J. GUNASEGARAM.

References made in the early Sangam Literature of the Tamils, foreign notices found in the writings of the Greeks and Romans, and Tamil loan words found in Hebrew and Greek along with other evidences brought to light by excavations in Ur of the Chaldees and Palestine, give us some idea of the early trade and cultural contacts of the Dravidians, (and in particular of the Tamils) with ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, Rome and Arabia.

The extent of this trade and a critical estimate of these contacts require a separate lecture. As a result of the more recent excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, Chitaldrug in Mysore and at Adichanallur further south, the probability that civilization spread from India to Egypt and Babylonia, and not, as it was believed earlier, from the Valley of the Nile or the Euphrates to India, has been strengthened.

K. M. Panikkar in his, " A Survey of Indian History (1954)," says :—" One thing, however, is certain and can no longer be contested — civilization did not come to India with the Aryans. This doctrine of the Aryan origin of Indian civilization which finds no support in Indian Literature (which does not consider the Dasyus (Dravidians) as uncivilized), is the result of the theories of Indo-Germanic scholars who held that everything valuable in the world originated from the Aryans. Not only is Indian Civiliza-

---

This article represents the substance of a lecture delivered under the auspices of the Tamil Cultural Society, Colombo.

tion pre-Vedic, but the essential features of Hindu religion as we know it today were perhaps present in Mohenjo-Daro."

"There is enough in the fragments we have recovered," says Sir John Marshall, "about the religious articles found on the sites to demonstrate that this religion of the Indus people was the lineal progenitor of Hinduism. In fact, *Siva and Kali, the worship of the Linga and other features of popular Hinduism, were well established in India long before the Aryans came.*"

This civilization and culture were not destroyed by the Aryans, and the Indus Valley religious ideas which centred round *the worship of Siva* (*the oldest monotheistic religion known to the world*) who combines in himself the male as well as the female principle in creation, continue to be cherished in Dravidian India, and particularly in the Tamil countries, to this day.

"The clearest evidence of the Dravidian origin of Siva worship," says Panikkar, "is found in the Aryan attitude towards Linga and the God whom it symbolises. In Rig Veda (vii) Ch. 21-5 we have the significant statement :—

> "Let those whose deity is the Phallus not penetrate our Sanctuary" ....Siva assumes increased importance only in the later Vedas, and from the period of the Yajur Veda, Siva definitely assumes the aspect of Maheswara—or the Great God."

Hall in his, "Ancient History of the Near East," wrote long ago, "*The Culture of India is pre-Aryan in origin. As in Greece, the conquered countries civilized the conquerors. The Aryan Indian owed his civilization and his degeneration to the Dravidians as the Aryan Greek to the Mycaeneans.*"

Hall also believes that "the Sumerians derived their culture from India......" Investigators have been struck

by the fact that similar seals found both in Babylonia and in India belong to the *earliest* phase of the Mesopotamian culture, but to the *latest* phase of the Indus civilization, which suggests the priority of Dravidian India. (Will Durant, *Our Oriental Heritage* p. 395n). Childe, another historian, confirms this when he states, " the Indus civilization was ahead of the Babylonian at the beginning of the third millennium B.C. This, it should be noted, is a later phase of the Indian."

Will Durant, a living American historian, speaking of the Dravidians in his book, *Our Oriental Heritage,* says : —

> " They were already a civilized people when the Aryan broke down upon them ; their adventurous merchants sailed the sea even to Sumeria and Babylon and their cities knew many refinements and luxuries. It was from them, apparently, that the Aryans took their village community and their system of land-tenure and taxation. To this day the Deccan is still essentially Dravidian in stock and customs, in language, literature and arts."

Who were these adventurous merchant seamen who sailed the seas ? Their descendants are present today in this very hall to listen — not to their glorious ventures across the Arabian and Mediterranean seas — but to their building of Greater India and their spread of Indian Culture in the regions now known as South-East Asia.

The Dravidians who were identified with (Dramilas) (Tamils) were also known as Thirayar — the men who rode the waves, the race which in the very dawn of history carried its trade and culture across the waves to the West and to the East — the harbingers of civilization.

They were able to declare through the lips of their incomparable poets,

யாதுமூரே யாவரும் கேளிர்.

The one world idea, new to the modern world, was already old to the Tamils of the Sangam age — ocean rovers, dauntless Thirayars who sang—

திரை கடலோடியுந் திரவியந்தேடு.

In an old Tamil poem of the Medieval period the writer mentions 17 countries where the Tamil Language, and consequently the Tamil culture, were known. I quote the words of the verse :—

சிங்களஞ் சோனகஞ் சாவகஞ் சீனந்துளுக்குடகங்
கொங்கணங் கன்னடங் கொல்லந் தெலுங்கம் வங்கங்
கங்கமதங் கடாரங் கவடங் கடுங்குசலங்
தங்கும் புகழ் தமிழ் சூழ் பதினேழ் புவி தாமிவையே.

Among the seventeen countries referred to are : Ceylon, Java, Malaya, Cambodia and China. The word சோனகம் should be taken to include Arabia and neighbouring countries.

Some South Indian Brahmins with an Aryan complex, in their histories of the Tamil language and of South India, have attributed such references to ignorance on the part of early Tamil writers. Since the appearance of such works, thanks to the energy of European scholars, much research has been done which has revealed unmistakably traces of the Tamil language and culture in these and other lands across the seas.

Similarly, Chinese historical sources which refer to the maritime traders bringing typical Indian products to China as far back as 7th Century B.C., ' were generally regarded with incredulity.' These accounts have received striking confirmation by the discovery in the Philippines of a number of iron age finds bearing close resemblance to objects found in South India of about the same period—the first millennium B.C.[1]

---

1 According to Paul Pelliot there is evidence in Chinese literature of diplomatic relations between South Indian Courts and the Chinese Empire as early as the 2nd Century B.C. A Chinese writer, Pau Kou, who

"Professor Beyer conducted a remarkable series of excavations during the years 1926 to 1930, and the evidence has been summed up by R. B. Dixon who did a first-hand examination of the objects brought to light by Prof. Beyer. Among the finds were a large variety of iron weapons and implements and glass beads and bangles made in the Tamil country." (K.A.N.). I shall quote what Dixon has to say of these:

> "Now both the iron and glass objects are similar to, and in some cases identical with, the prehistoric glass and iron finds in the South of India. They occur in the dolmen tombs and urns which are found by hundreds and thousands, and which almost antedate the historic Chola, Chera, Pandyan kingdoms whose history goes back to the beginning of the Christian era or before. As finds of similar glass beads and bangles have recently been excavated in the Malay Peninsula, in dolmen tombs in Java and in North Borneo, the inference is inescapable that we have clear evidence of trade contact with the Northern Philippines and Southern India, running well back into the first millennium B.C.
>
> "The extensive trade and colonization and later conquests of South Indian kingdoms in Sumatra and Java as well as in Indo-China in the early centuries of the Christian era, of course, are well known. This new material, however, seems to make it clear that this was far from being the beginning of such contacts, but rather the last stages in an association reaching as far as the Northern Philippines which had begun many centuries before."

At Adichanallur, an ancient site on the banks of the Tambraparani in the Tinnevely district, extensive prehistoric urn burials and iron implements related to those found in the Philippines and Palestine have been unearthed. A

lived at the end of the 1st Century, mentions that in the time of the Hun Emperor the Chola Kings sent embassies to China.—K. M. Panikkar, *India and China*, pp. 17, 18.

remarkable find was the three-pronged fork or trident of iron. Many such tridents were discovered at Adichanallur. This evidence suggests that the worship of Murugan or Velan, the son of Siva (known as the God of Kataragama in Ceylon), was popular in the Tamil country even in those remote times. This Muruga worship would appear to have been carried by the Tamils to Palestine and Syria in the West, to Ceylon in the South, and to the distant Phillippines across the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

In 1200 B.C. at Adichanallur, the Tamils were found to have cultivated rice, and it was in this region that the iron industry had its origin. There is every evidence to prove that the Tamils were the earliest people to introduce the cultivation of rice and the use of iron implements to the countries in the West as well as in South-East Asia.

In support of this contention I would quote two distinguished authorities—

Piggot in his *Prehistoric India,* page 43 (Pelican Books, 1952), says with regard to rice : "It seems probable that rice cultivation began earlier in India than it did in China and that the knowledge reached the latter country about 2000 B.C." He adds in page 259, "The Rig Veda knows nothing of rice." In other words, the Aryan immigrants into India learnt the cultivation of rice from the Dravidians. In the light of these facts, it is amusing to find that our local historians have been at pains to show that rice cultivation was introduced into Ceylon by the Aryans. This, of course, is the least of the glaring historical inaccuracies in some of our so-called histories of Ceylon.

With regard to the centre of origin or iron, I give an extract from the Bulletin of the British Iron and Steel Federation—1949. Sir William Larke, Director of the British Iron and Steel Federation, says—

> "The centre of origin is variously placed in India, where there are historical traditions and remains indi-

> cating a highly developed iron culture. Hyderabad and Trichinopoly are considered by many to have been the centres of production of wootz. ....This steel was noted for centuries, being carried by merchants from India to Damascus and Toledo."

It will be noted that both these sites are in South India (Deccan). Sir William gives the date of this origin of the iron age as 1400 to 1500 B.C. The iron implements found in the Adichanallur site about the same period, and the transport of iron hoes and tridents to distant countries such as Palestine and the Philippines confirms this conclusion.

For the purpose of studying the influence of Indian Art and Culture in the countries of South-East Asia, Quaritch Wales in his recent work, *The Making of Great India*, divides South-East Asian countries into two zones —the Western Zone and the Eastern Zone. Under the Western Zone he includes Ceylon, Burma, Central Siam, Malaya and Sumatra ; while he includes Java, Champa (Siam) and Cambodia in the Eastern Zone.

The author (Quaritch Wales) points out that Indian scholars—most of them North Indians and a few Aryanised Brahmins of South India—seem often to have tended to over-emphasise the overseas influence of their own part of the country—the implication being that they have exaggerated the role played by North Indian and Aryan culture in South-East Asia. He, however, accepts unhesitatingly the conclusion arrived at by M. Coedes, another great authority on South-East Asian Culture, that—

> "All the regions of India contributed more or less to this expansion, and it is South India that had the greatest part, for the Southern half of the Greater India ..consisting of Ceylon, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Malaya and Bali—was naturally most exposed to South Indian influence."

More recently, M. Stern has shown that even in Champa (Siam) and Cambodia which are included in the Eastern

Zones by Quaritch Wales, Pallava (Tamil) influences have played a significant part from very early times in the evolution of their culture.

The Indianisation of these countries in the Western as well as in the Eastern Zone would appear to have proceeded in successive waves of cultural expansion.

> The first wave which may be termed the Amaravati period (2nd and 3rd centuries) represents the Art of *Andhra* which is Dravidian and South Indian.
>
> The second wave—which may be termed the *Gupta* period—represents North Indian Art modified by Greek influences. The Guptas were Hindus but they did not persecute Buddhism.
>
> The third—*Pallava* Art—was mainly Dravidian and Tamil Hindu Art. It must be remembered that the Pallavas (Tondayar or Tondaman) were at the same time promoters of Sanskrit learning in the Tamil country.
>
> The fourth—*Pala* period—lasted from the 8th to the 10th centuries. This Art had its origin in Bengal and was mainly Buddhist.
>
> The fifth—*Chola* Art—lasted from the 10 to the 12th centuries. It was again South Indian and Tamil. This wave was purely Hindu. " Their great achievement," says Panikkar, " was in plastic art known as Chola bronzes. " The Nataraja figures and images and portraits of the Tamil Saints found in Polonnaruwa and in South India have been recognised as coming among the masterpieces of the world (Reginald Le May).

All five waves of Indian cultural expansion affected the countries in the Western as well as the Eastern Zones of South East Asia. In the Western Zone which includes Ceylon, Burma, Central Siam, Malaya and Sumatra, Quaritch Wales states *that Indianisation was so intense that no indigenous art or culture ever developed, and that the bulk of the upper classes were mainly Indian Colonists. There was no evolution of any art or culture for lack of*

local genius to act as a shaper of evolution. "The archaeological remains represent simply the reflection of one or other waves of Indian cultural expansion. They may be justly called, colonial or Indianesque."

In the light of these facts we in South Ceylon have very little reason or right to speak of an indigenous culture. From very early times the culture of Ceylon has been one imposed on its people by successive waves of Indian cultural contacts. In more recent centuries the people of South Ceylon came under Portuguese, Dutch and British cultural influences and they absorbed them with equal avidity, though apparently devotees of "Buddhist Culture."

* * * * *

It will be remembered that the earlier cultural influences brought to bear on Ceylon were Pandyan and Cholian, though no archaeological remains of any consequence are available. The truth of this contention, however, is admitted by the author of the Mahavamsa who says that Vijaya and his 500 followers got their wives from the Pandyan country, and that these 'brides were followed by craftsmen and a thousand families of eighteen guilds.' He adds that all this multitude of men disembarked at Mahathitha (*i.e.*, Mantota near Mannar, a city sacred to the Hindus.)

Could any reasonable person believe that the Tamil men and women described as a 'multitude' — the women of the court, the craftsmen and the members of the thousand families of eighteen guilds, spoke to one another and taught their children in an Aryan tongue, which the modern Sinhalese assumes Vijaya and his 500 followers spoke, or that they developed a culture and followed a religion alien to their ancestral heritage ? Who could doubt that the culture of these people was Dravidian, their language Tamil, and their religion Hinduism pure and simple ?

The Mahavamsa itself associates Vijaya with the Kalingas — a Dravidian people — whose ruling family

seems to have had marriage alliances with the Pandyan Tamils. The Mahavamsa records further that when Vijaya died childless he was succeeded by Panduvasudeva, a Pandyan in name, whose mother was the daughter of the King of Madda (now Madurai) (vide *Mahavamsa* Geiger's translation, Chapter VII). Tamil and Tamil culture are not likely to have been something strange either to Vijaya or to his successor Panduvasudeva. We cannot escape the assumption that the early rulers of Ceylon were drawn either from the descendants of Panduvasudeva or imported from South India, when no heir was available in Ceylon. These rulers were in fact not Sinhalese but strictly speaking 'the kings of the Sinhalese.' In course of time the term 'Sinhalese' appears to have been used to designate the indigenous people of the country, and not the rulers or their kith and kin and their followers.

Emerson Tennent in his *Ceylon,* Vol. I, pp. 370-1, has noted this when he points out that—

> "The *Mahavamsa* and the *Rajaratnacari* in order to vindicate the inferiority of the natives to their masters, speak of their labours as that of 'men and snakes,' 'men and demons'." Because they were so numerous in number, they were given seats of equal eminence with the king on festive occasions. "The feeling was encouraged and matured into a conviction which prevailed to the latest period of Sinhalese Sovereignty, that no individual of pure Sinhalese extraction could be elevated to the supreme power, since no one could prostrate himself before one of his own nation."

* * * * *

BURMA

From very early times Hinduism and Buddhism appear to have flourished side by side in Burma. From the archaeological excavations made at Prom, the chief city of old Burma, Harvey says that the finds were mainly Hindu rather than Buddhist. In later times, though Burma

became predominantly Buddhistic, Hindus lived with a Buddhist population and worshipped in their own temples. This early entry of Saivaism was probably an event in the great Tamil trade movement which started in the 2nd millennium B.C., and swept across the seas to the Southern Islands and Malaya as far north as the Philippines.

The earliest colonists to exercise authority over Burma appear to have been again South Indians. The city of Prom was also known as Vanadesi, the name of the capital of the Kadambas in South India. The earliest inscriptions discovered at Prom is in the South Indian Kadamba script of the 5th C. A.D. In the 5th and 6th centuries, however, Burma became the centre of Southern Buddhism. A number of terracotta plaques carrying the effigy of Buddha were found inscribed in South Indian characters. The contact of South Indian merchants with Burma in the early centuries of the Christian era is attested to by Ptolemy who had noticed that large ships used to sail from the East coast of South India to Burma.

The rise of Hinayana Buddhism in the 5th C. A.D., was mainly due to inspiration received by Burma from the great movement which started at Kanchi (Kanchipuram) in the Tamil country. Kanchi it will be remembered is referred to in Manimekalai, the great Tamil Buddhist epic. It was the home of that illustrious Tamil Buddhist Scholar Dharmapala, 6th C. A.D., who was the Head of the Nalanda University. He should not, however, be confused with the other Dharmapala, a Tamil himself and a Buddhist scholar, who came to Ceylon and wrote the famous commentaries.

In the excavations made in 1926-1927, a relic chamber of a stupa containing many finds of great interest were found. The chamber was found closed by a stone slab bearing a representation of a stupa having a cylindrical dome with a rounded top and five umbrellas above, indicating that these had a South Indian origin. Though most

Burmese became Buddhists, the worship of Siva and Vishnu continued to be popular, the majority of the Hindus being South Indian settlers and colonizers from India.

Most of the old kings of Burma, it will be noted, have the Varman ending and *the scripts used in almost all the inscriptions found in the country are South Indian in character.* The Pallavas of South India — Tondayar or Tondamans — have contributed the greatest share towards the culture and greatness of ancient Burma. Of the magnificent Buddhist temple of Ananda, Quaritch Wales says — " Here we have a South Indian temple crowned with a North Indian Sikara."

Scott, an authority on Burmese Archaeology and History — in his account of the reign of Alaungsithu (1112-1187), observes :—

> " The connection with India was still maintained and the form of the many Pagan temples suggests architects from the Deccan...Many of the images and their attitudes are quite South Indian. "
>
> " The presence of a considerable number of South Indian Tamils through the centuries is attested by the well-known Grantha—Tamil inscription of Pagan attesting the existence of a Vishnu temple built there by Vanadesi Merchants and a gift to the temple made in the 13th C. by a merchant from one of the port towns on the Malabar Coast."—(*Epigraphia Indica*)

The Malay Peninsula

It has been found that in the Malay Peninsula early South Indian colonists had founded a number of independent states. There are no records except Chinese notices to form an exact idea of the nature and origin of these states. By the end of the 13th century the entire region came under the power of the Sailendras and later fell an easy prey to the Siamese.

Malacca was an early Indian Hindu colony as proved by the Makara fragment built into the retaining wall near an ancient Portuguese Church. The Portuguese generally had no regard for antiquities or relics except for those of their own faith. The find, however, is an indication that the Pallavas of South India had exercised authority in Malaya in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Perak, another district, has been identified as an ancient Hindu colony. 'A seal with an inscription in a South Indian script of the 5th C., or earlier was found.'

Kedah was an unmistakable Hindu settlement. Dr. Quaritch Wales investigated no fewer than 30 sites round about Kedah. The results show that this site was in continuous occupation by South Indians — Hindus and Buddhists — mainly Tamils. On a low spar of the Kedah peak to the south have been discovered traces of a Siva Temple. A large Siva Temple also had been identified as such by a four-armed Ganesh figure and a bronze weapon of Muruga. This temple is assigned to the 11th C. M. Coedes believes that Kedah is the same as Kadaram of Tamil (*Chola*).

TAKUA-PA

Lajonquiere's investigations at Takua-pa, which is a town situated north of the Perak district, brought to light a number of old sculptures and monuments which go to prove that Takua-pa was a well-known harbour and an early trading centre resorted to by South Indian and particularly Tamil traders. This has been supported by a Tamil inscription discovered in 1902 by Mr. Bourke, a mining engineer of the Siamese Government. Further in the interior on a hill in a dilapidated condition were found the figure of Siva and Parvati and a danseuse. Describing the finds, Lajonquiere observes : —

> "The costumes in numerous folds treated with details, the profusion of jewels, the elegant movements of the body, recall very nearly the oldest sculptures of Dravidian India."

Near this sculpture is a slab which carries a Tamil inscription. It records the construction of a tank by one who describes himself as the Lord of Nangur. The tank is placed under the protection of the members of the Manigramam, under the residents of the Cantonment described as Senamukham and one other group of which the nature is obscured by a gap in the inscription.

No one, however, knows who maintained a Senamukham at Takua-pa, and for what purpose. Was the Lord of Nangur a Tamil military Chieftain or just a Merchant Prince ? The term Manigramam implies the large and influential guild of Tamil merchants of whom we read in diverse connections. These historical associations would have been lost to us but for the scientific zeal of Western explorers. (K.A.N. Sastri).

Pierre Dupont has pointed out that Pro No' Visnu of Takua-pa is a pure Pallava product of the 7th C. A.D., while the seventh century Siva temple remains excavated in Kedah by Quaritch Wales have been ascribed by him to South Indian Colonists, most of whom were from the Tamil country.

Among the statues found belonging to different periods and styles was the admirable bust of Lokeswara (Siva) discovered by Prince Dumrong and now in the Bangkok Museum. M. Coedes says of this statue :—

> "The benevolent serenity of the face, the noble bearing of the shoulder and the magnificence of dress and adornment class this statue, badly mutilated, among the masterpieces of Indian sculpture."

At Ligor on the eastern coast of the peninsula was found a Tamil inscription dated in a Saka year in words. The word for the hundred figure is lost. "The record mentions some charity in favour of Brahmins instituted according to the orders of a Dharmasenapathi."

MALAYA AND ISLAM

The Malay Peninsula continues to be in debt to South India and Ceylon to this day to thousands of Tamil and Tamil-speaking Muslim merchants, Tamil educationists, doctors, engineers and labourers. The Malayans themselves would appear to have appreciated the value of this contact by recognising Tamil as a language to be taught at the Malayan University. The results on the cultural side of these contacts have struck all observers.

"There are many similarities," says Annandale, "between the Muhamadanism of the Labbies of the Indian shore of the Gulf of Mannar and that of the Malays. I think it would not be impossible to find striking parallels between objects in daily use, and especially in the pattern, with which these objects are adorned among the two races." It has been established that an old type of South Indian water vessel known in Tamil as kendi, the kendi with a spout, is in use by the Malays and called by the Tamil name. Again, "The importance of Rama and Hanuman in the folklore of the Malays, Buddhists and Muhamadans alike agree with legends which link these with the region round Adam's Bridge region, whence came the bulk of the Tamils resident in Malaya." *Annandale goes on to add, "I would even hazard the suggestion that it is largely owing to the commercial activities of the Labbies and their ancestors that the Malays of the mainland were first converted from Shamanism to Hinduism and then from Hinduism to what they call, in phraseology of curiously mingled derivation, the Agama Islam.*

Several common Malay words like those for washerman, kind or sort, marriage pledge, leaf, couple, and so on, have been traced indubitably to Tamil origins and these are some of the results of an unbroken contact throughout the centuries that follow the early period of colonisation. (K. A. N. Sastri, *South Indian Influences in the Far East*)

Java

By about A.D. 400, Indian culture and Hinduism had obtained firm footing in Java. Though the extant inscriptions in West Java are of a later date than those of Borneo: "There can be no doubt," says Nilakanta Sastri, "that Hindu culture must have reached Java, if anything a little earlier, from South India, than it reached Borneo." The inscriptions of West Java are engraved in the distinctly South Indian type of characters, and these are actually half a century later than the inscriptions of Mulavarman found in Borneo. The West Javan inscriptions refer to the 'Illustrious Purnavarman' who once ruled at Taruma in Java. The inscriptions are identical with the Grantha alphabet used by the Pallavas of South India (300 to 800 A.D.).

Another inscription found at Changal (732 A.D.) describes the consecration of a linga by King Sangaya of Central Java, whose ancestors came from Kunjara-kunjadesa in South India. Another at Dinaya of the year A.D. 760, describes the erection of an image of Agastya. *In all these the era used is Saka era, an essentially South Indian reckoning. The Northern Vikrama era is unknown.*

On the Dieng Plateaux, 6,500 feet above sea level, there are five groups of temples of an earlier period, all dedicated to Siva. The style of architecture is Dravidian and South Indian. Kroom points out that the Dieng Art shows 'most agreement with, or properly least difference from, South Indian Art, specifically from the square plan, symmetry, roof stages and stresses on horizontal lines.'

Though Siva worship had been introduced by Tamil merchants and colonists in pre-Christian centuries, the later Pallava-Tamil influences are strongly indicated by the presence of Kala Makara over doorways, 'for the Kala-Makara combined motif was a Pallava innovation in Indian Art.'

The Sailendras, who ruled over Java and Sumatra and whose origins have not been finally decided upon by scholars, were Mahayanist Buddhists, and in all probability a dynasty that had its origin in South India. Throughout their imperial authority they had been in contact with South India and South Indian Buddhists till they were overpowered later by the Chola Empire.

Here is what K. M. Panikkar says in his 'India and China' p. 20 :—

> "Its relations with India were of the most intimate kind. We know, for example, that Sri Vijaya Kings endowed institutions in Nalanda and had monasteries erected at their expense in Nagapatam...The Sailendra monarchs of Sri Vijaya enjoyed great prestige in India, and their envoys frequently visited Indian Courts."

It is interesting to note that while in Java there has been a fusion between Saivaism and Mahayanist Buddhism, Bali has always remained Hindu. That South Indian culture is bound up with the Art of Java is clearly evidenced in the dance forms and worship of the Balinese. The Saiva form of Hinduism ante-dated Buddhism in Java, while Bali still remains Hindu ; and Saivaism was in all probability introduced by Tamil merchants and colonists in pre-Christian times. The majestic Sivan Temple in Perambanam in Java is thought by many competent judges to contain the finest sculptured panels to be found in Java. Kroom considers the Perambanam to represent 'the apotheosis of Saivaism as Borobodor does of Buddhism.'

"In the organisation of rural economy and village communities, the institution and ideas appear unmistakably to have been brought from South India. Institutions of Village Government are either unknown or quite different in their nature in non-Hindu parts. The proceedings in village meetings in Java even today strongly remind one of the conditions of village administration in South India

in ancient days as it is vividly portrayed in the numberless inscriptions of the Chola monarchs." (K. A. N. Sastri).

Java has had continuous contacts with South India in later times. The Chola Empire in the 10th and the 11th centuries had close association with Java, and Javanese culture was further influenced by Tamil culture after the Cholas defeated the Sailendras of Java. Bhikkhus from Kanchipuram praise the Javanese ruler Hayam Wuruk in the 14th C. ; Jayanagara adopted the characteristic Pandyan title Sundarapandya at the coronation in the 14th century, and adopted the Pandyan Emblem of the two fishes for his seal.

SUMATRA

The rulers of Sumatra, according to Chinese historical records, were in communication with China during the period 450-562 A.D. The names of these rulers, judged from the Chinese transcriptions, are typical Hindu names, and the manners and customs similar to the South Indian customs of Champa and Kumbuja (Siam and Cambodia).

In Sumatra are found certain names of tribal subdivisions which are unmistakably South Indian, and specifically Tamilian names such as Choliya, Pandiya, Maehliyala, and also Pallava as well as Tekam (or Tekkanam or Deccan). "The social organisation of some of these tribes seems to date from a very remote past and it is quite probable that these names were taken over when they were still powerful realities in South India," says Nilakanta Sastri.

No temples in Sumatra belonging to this ancient period have survived as they had probably been built of wood following the South Indian practice in pre-Christian times. This contact with Sumatra was kept up by South India for well over a thousand years. In the 11th century A.D. the Cholas invaded Sumatra which was at that time under the

Sailendras. Tamil inscriptions of this period have been found at Luba Tua dating from the year 1088. Tamil tribal names are still found among the Batak of Sumatra.

Thus Sumatra had not only been colonised by the Tamils but it also became an integral part of the Greater Indian Cultural Area.

CELEBES

In Celebes, a large island further east of Borneo and Java and south of the Philippines, traces of South Indian influences have been found. The Buddha images there show affinities with the earliest form of the Amaravati Art (Second century A.D.). Archaeologists have not been able to decide how far this culture had penetrated into the interior of the island. Recently, however, an ancient bell and a pair of cymbals have been discovered. The bell and cymbals are very similar to those still in daily use in South India in domestic worship and otherwise. The probability is that South Indian cultural influence had preceded the arrival of South Indian Buddhism.

The Pallava-Tamil period was the age of South Indian colonisation par excellence, and unmistakable marks of evidence of Pallava rule are found scattered all over South East Asian countries including Celebes. " But," says Sastri, " palaeography and art styles are the two unmistakable marks of the antiquity of objects belonging to really early times and attesting direct contact of these lands, and the tests, as we have seen, point to a time much earlier than that of the rise of the Pallavas."

BORNEO

The earliest archaeological evidence in Borneo is a Sanskrit inscription, fully and decidedly South Indian, referring to the conquest of Mulavarman, a Pallava king. There is also evidence of the Agastya cult in Borneo already noticed in Java, a cult which is essentially South Indian.

The Ganesha image found in Sarawak, North Borneo, a linga and yoni found in West Borneo and a Pallava inscription in the East coast of Borneo, prove unmistakably the early colonisation of Borneo by the South Indians, and particularly by the Tamils.

Philippines

I have already referred to the iron age finds in the Philippines bearing close resemblance to objects found in South India about the same period, more than a thousand years before Christ, and also to other evidences of trade contact with Malaya, Indo-China, North Borneo and Philippines in those remote times. The Spanish who dominated the Philippines in recent centuries are not likely to have preserved religious and cultural antiquities of other Faiths. In 1820, however, a copper image of Siva was discovered in one of those islands which points to a remote period in which the worship of Siva had been introduced by South Indian merchants.

That these facts are by no means unsupported by other evidence may be shown by the remarks made by Mr. Phiroz Kutar, Technical Director, which were reported in the Madras 'Hindu' (October, 1954).

> "Researches into the cultural and racial origins of the people of Ceylon and of countries lying eastward have shown that they were once colonised from South India and in particular, the Fillipino script has striking similarities with that of Tamilark. These researches have also shown that Fillipino dialects belonged to the Dravidian family."

Cambodia

I have so far not been able to touch on Tamil cultural influences in Central Siam, Champa and Cambodia. This aspect of the subject would require a separate lecture. I would crave your indulgence to refer to a state ceremony

in Cambodia[1] where Saiva Tamil hymns are sung even today, to indicate the extent of Tamil cultural influence in these regions.

Cambodia had come under Saiva Tamil influence, not to speak of Southern Buddhism, from very early days. Though Buddhism continues to be its State religion, the old Saiva ceremonies conducted by the Tamil Brahmin priests are still found incorporated in its Coronation ceremonies. The Saiva Brahmins of Cambodia would appear to have come originally from Rameswaram in South India. Many of these, with the ascendancy of Buddhism and the adoption of the Siamese themselves as Brahmins, seem to have taken along with them, elsewhere, valuable documents which would otherwise have revealed more fully the nature of South Indian Tamil influence in the religious ceremonies and court life of the Siamese in Cambodia.

Quaritch Wales, in describing the swinging festival on the occasion of the crowning of Cambodian Kings, says :— " The King seated himself on a throne beneath an umbrella of seven tiers which, after the King was crowned, was replaced by one of nine tiers emblematic of full sovereignty. The high priest of Siva then came to him, and after rendering homage, pronounced the Tamil mantra, the name of which means ' Opening of the Portals of Kailasa '. " Wales adds that the Siamese priests now know neither Sanskrit nor Tamil, but that in an earlier period there were Brahmins who did understand these Indian languages. The texts which the Siamese priests still possess are Sanskrit and Tamil hymns with instructions in Siamese for the preliminary rites intended to be used in daily worship.

The Rev. Fr. Thani Nayagam, a member of the Tamil Cultural Society and the Editor of ' Tamil Culture,' visited

---

1 "The Cambodian kings bore the title of Varman, which reminds one of the Pallava kings of South India. The magnificent temples of Angkor-Vat and of Bayon are similar to those of Southern India. Taking all these facts together, as well as the introduction of Nataraja Siva from South India one thinks that the colonists perhaps came from Southern India." *(P. Nath Bose)*

the Brahmin Temple in Bangkok and heard the Brahmin priests recite the Tamil verses used in the 'Triambavay — Tirupavay' a swinging festival at the coronation of their Kings. He has shown that the verses are actually the first two songs of Manickavasagar's Thiruvempavai. For a further account of this ceremony and a discussion on further research that should be undertaken by Tamil scholars in South-East Asian countries, I would refer you to the excellent article by Fr. Thani Nayagam appearing in the 1955, July Number of the *Tamil Culture* Magazine.

Before I close, I would bring to your notice certain facts which will enable you to understand more fully the study of the Indian influences in these colonies.

1. In most of the South-East Asian colonies the strong Dravidian cultural influence is stressed by the fact that the Saka Era, a distinctly South Indian Calendar, as opposed to the Vikrama Era of the Northerner, has been in vogue.

2. The New Year celebrated in many of these countries including Champa (Cambodia) and Ceylon is the Tamil New Year 13th-14th April. This is an ancient Tamil astronomical fixture going back to the Mohenjo-Daro period and continued through the Sangam Age. In Ceylon under the British it was termed Hindu, and has now come to be called 'Hindu' or 'Sinhalese'.

3. The Brahmins, most of them Saivites, mentioned in connection with the Indian Colonies were Tamils or South Indian 'adopted' Brahmins. This is a process referred to in one of the Upanishads, where it is stated that of the white, brown and dark Brahmins, the last were the cleverest because they knew all three Vedas, while the others knew only one and two respectively (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad).

4. In the purely religious inscriptions in these colonies Sanskrit was used by Vaishnavites and Mahayana Buddhists, and Pali by the Hinayana Buddhists, though they came from the South, because these

languages alone were considered fit vehicles for their respective religious pronouncements. Again, the Pallava Kings (Tondayars), though they were patrons of Sanskrit, became champions of Tamil after their conversion to Saivaism.

5. Rigid caste divisions were unknown among the early Tamils. The caste system, as we know it today, was brought into the South of India by Brahminism. In the maritime activity of the early Dravidians, the men who lived along the sea-coast, apparently, played the largest part. With the introduction of the Brahminical prejudice against fish and sea-faring activities (intentional or otherwise), may be said to have commenced the gradual weakening of the maritime enterprise and cultural expansion of the Dravidian peoples and of the Tamils in particular.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Childe, G.— *The Most Ancient East,* 1928.
Coedes, G.— *Indian Art and Letters.*
Hall, J. W.— *Eminent Asians,* 1929.
Marshall, Sir John.— *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indian Civilization,* 1931.
Nilakanta Sastri.— *A History of South India,* 1955 ;
South Indian Influences in the Far East, 1949.
Panikkar, K. M.— *A Survey of Indian History,* 1954 ;
India and China, 1957.
Piggott, Stuart.— *Prehistoric India* (Pelican Book), 1952.
Quaritch Wales, H. G.— *The Making of Greater India,* 1957 ;
Siamese State Ceremonies, 1931.
Reginald Le May.— *The Culture of South East Asia,* 1954.
Scott, J. G.— *Burma from the Earliest times to the Present day,* 1924.
Will Durant.— *Our Oriental Heritage,* 1942.

Sir William Larke.—*Bulletin of the British Iron and Steel Federation,* 1949.
Dixon.— *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* V. 639, 1936.
Rev. Fr. Thani Nayagam.— *Tamil Culture,* Vol. V, No. 3, July, 1955.
Epigraphica Indica.

Dialectal Variation in Eleventh Century Telugu

K. MAHADEVA SASTRI

The earliest extant literary work in Telugu is a translation of the Sanskrit Mahābhārata by Nannaya Bhatta in the 11th C. A.D. Prior to Nannaya, our knowledge of the condition of the Telugu language is derived solely from inscriptions which are available from about 600 A.D. The language of the early inscriptions differs much from that of Nannaya's Mahābhārata; it is more archaic and betrays closer affinities with other Dravidian languages of South India. But as we come down in point of time the language gradually changes approximating to that of Nannaya. Thus, for instance, the tatsama-laden prose style of the Koravi inscription of Chālukya Bhīma of the 10th C. is very much like the prose in the Āndhra Bhārata. The existence of a poetic tradition in the pre-Nannaya age is also indicated by a number of verse inscriptions belonging to this period.

Nannaya's Mahābhārata was written in the Mārga style — with a large admixture of the Sanskritic element, but basically the language was the living idiom of the day. Generally speaking there was not much difference between the literary and the spoken dialects in the Kavitraya period, 11th—13th C. That difference came later when grammarians began to prescribe the language of the Bhārata as the standard of correct usage in literature. The literary dialect was not immune to change but it changed slowly, while the spoken language changed much faster. It is therefore necessary to study both these currents along parallel lines. We will then be in a position to appreciate the connection between the literary and the spoken dialects

— to see for instance, how the colloquialisms of one period become accepted in standard usage at a later time, how some are marginal cases as evident from the discussions and differing opinions of the grammarians over the question of their recognition, or how some forms or constructions become obsolete yielding place to new ones or again how some forms never get an entry into the literary dialect no matter how old or widely current they are. This study is necessary for properly understanding the development of the language.

The spoken language of the historical period has not been completely or correctly recorded for us anywhere. We have to piece together whatever information we could gather from various sources like the inscriptions, popular literature, commentaries and other works which are outside the classical tradition. For the age of Nannaya however, inscriptions are our only source. A study of nearly 60 Telugu inscriptions dated in the 11th century (published in Volumes IV, V, VI and X of the *South Indian Inscriptions*—Epigraphy department, Government of India, and in *Corpus of Inscriptions in the Telingana districts*—Hyderabad Archaeological series) along with Nannaya's work shows the following dialectal differences in the language of that century.

1. In the orthography of modern Telugu, the arthānusvāra stands in the place of a lost anusvāra except in those places where it represents a lost syllable. The anusvāra was as a rule represented by the class nasal in the oldest Telugu inscriptions. The practice of dropping the nasal in pronunciation in certain words seems to have come into vogue as early as the 9th C. A.D. as indicated by the Pillar inscription of Yuddhamalla at Bezwada, in which metre requires the elision of the nasal in some places.

In the eleventh century inscriptions the form kūnturu occurs five times with the nasal, (*SII*. IV — 1010, X-8, IV-1161, 1015, V-1137), and once without it in spelling

(V-1125). Nannaya and later poets generally preferred forms in which the nasal was dropped after an initial long vowel. But Nannichodadeva, a poet ascribed to the 12th C. A.D. combined a word like *pōmdimi* with a tatsama word *bhāmḍamu* in *prāsa* indicating clearly that the nasal in the former was fully pronounced in his speech. Although not accepted in the Kavitraya literary tradition, the retention of the nasal in such words has continued down the centuries upto the present day and may be seen in the conservative dialect of the southern Andhra districts. For example, the words *kōmti, tōmka,* and *pēmḍa* are pronounced with the nasal in the Nellore district whereas they have become *kōti, tōka* and *pēḍa* in the Circars.

2. The loss of medial vowels by syncopation in nouns as well as in verbal roots is found in Nannaya's language, but it is carried to great lengths in colloquial Telugu. The Saiva poets Nannichōḍadeva and Pālkuriki Sōmanātha who belonged to the dēśi school used such forms more freely than Nannaya. For example, in Panḍitārādhya charitra of Pālkuriki Sōmanātha we frequently meet with words like *kasvu* (=*kasavu*), *targu* (=*tarugu*), *cerci* (=*cerici*), *civki* (=*civiki*), etc. Thus *koḍku* is used often for *Koḍuku* in the inscriptions.

3. In the inscriptional language, the nominative termination *-mu* in some words is dropped before the plural suffix *-lu* or before an oblique case ending with compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel: *kuncālu* (*SII.* IV-1014), *angarangabhōgālaku* (X-58) *sakavarṣālu* (X-60), *tulāsankrānti nimityāna* (IV-1300). This feature is absent in Nannaya's language.

4. According to rules of Telugu grammar, a Sanskrit word can never enter into a compound with a Telugu word except as a tatsama. But we find quite a good number of compounds of Sanskrit and Telugu words, *vairisamāsas,* as they are called, in actual usage, and some of them also got

into literature. The compounds *nityapaḍi, divasapaḍi* are common in the inscriptions of this century.

There are three prayogas like this in Nannaya's Mahābhārata, viz., *karakanṭhuḍu, prāṇagoḍḍamu, jīvagaṟra.* Some grammarians tried to explain them away as tadbhavas. But the fact remains that in spite of the grammarians these forced themselves into literature and doubtless were freely used in the spoken language.

Nannichodadeva used many peculiar forms which point to the usage of his day, but examples of which are comparatively rare in the later period. These are semi-tatsamas like *barihikēs'abharambu, kaluhāragamdhi, haruṣās'rudhāralu,* and tatsamas like *mādhuryata, mārgi samghamu, sadyamiṣṭaphaladu,* etc. The word *nitya* (=*nityamu*) in the inscriptions is peculiar. There is also the unpāṇinian usage *kamalanētri* in an inscription dated 1075 A.D. (Epigraphica Indica IV-314).

5. The formation of the plural offers a case of a pronounced dialectal differentiation in the 11th C. language. Words which had l and r in the final syllable sometimes formed their plurals in -ḍlu in the inscriptions ; *engiḍlu* (Sg. *engili*), *nīḍlu* (Sg. *nīru*) (*SII.* IV-1015) ; also compare *guḍlu* (*SII.* X-647). In Nannaya these plurals would be *engillu, nīllu,* and *gullu.* The -ḍlu plurals above became obsolete very soon and did not survive in modern Telugu.

6. The pronoun of the III person epicene plural is *vāru* in Nannaya. The dialectal form *vānḍru* is found in a contemporary inscription in the expression *ānḍuvānḍru* (*SII.* IV-1015). This is later than *vāru,* and is formed from the Singular *vānḍu* (< *avanṟu,* cognate with Tamil *avan*) with the plural suffix -ru. Later poets used *vānḍru* beside *vāru.* But as the latter gradually began to be used as the honorific singular *vānḍru* and *vānḍlu* (*vānḍu* ± *lu*) (> *vāllu*) became generalised for the III pl. Dr. C. Narayana Rao points out that *vānḍru* has not been used by kavitraya

and that it occurs first in literature in Potana's *Bhāgavata* X-1, 1526 (*History of Telugu Language,* Vol. II, p. 1162).

7. In some cases in the inscriptions the stem vowel is lengthened instead of lengthening the vowel of the conjunctive particle -nu as we find in Nannaya in the later language; *eppuḍūnu* (*SII* X-4) *i darmmuvu cēkoni stānapatulunu, dēvakarmmulunu, s'rī vaiṣṇavulūnu naḍapamggalavāru* (VI-139).

The conjunctive particle -um has survived in this period from Old Telugu as seen from the following example: *nīri nēlayum badi maruturu velijēnunum dana yillunu...* (*Corpus of Inscriptions,* No. 6).

8. Beside the regular conjugational form *iccitimi* I pl. past verb of the root *iccu* 'to give' we have a dialectal variant, and obviously an abridged form of this, *istimi.* Both these occur in the same inscription; *Mailajiyya paṇḍitulaku angarangabhōgālakun -ācandrārkamugān-iccitimi. Koṭṭyadona dakshinana Mallepeggaḍa ceruvu nivedyānaku istimi* (*SII.* X-58). Dialectal forms like *istimi* have continued to exist from that time onwards up to the present day. They are now current in the Ceded Districts. They are used also by some of the later poets as S'rīnātha, but according to rules of grammar they are still regarded as incorrect and banned in literature.

EXTRACT FROM THE LETTER OF SRI SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI

...What Dr. Kamil Zvelebil says[1] about the fundamental contributions of the Tamilians to the culture of India and the world I fully agree with. But as you can see, what the Tamilians contributed is so much within the pan-Indian orbit that we also claim a share in the glory of Tamilakam as Indians. I can say, and say with the profoundest gratitude, that the devotional compositions of the Nayanmars and the Aẓvars—particularly of Manikka-Vasagar and others, have given me the highest spiritual exaltation. I am a great admirer of the Saiva Siddhanta, which is one of the Schools of Saiva Philosophy which we have in Bengal, Kashmir and elsewhere. The Chola bronzes are unique. But behind them is the tradition of bronze sculptures which are found in North Indian art also, antedating the Chola bronzes by several centuries. Tanjore, Chidambaram and Madurai are shrines of pan-Indian interest in which the entire Hindudom feels glorified. Tamilians have unquestionably made the basic things of Indian culture more profound and more extensive in many departments.

---

[1] Dr. Kamil Zvelebil's 'An Appeal' published in October 1956 issue of *Tamil Culture* wherein he cites Eight Anthologies—Sangam lyrics, Thirukkural, Silappadhikaram, Hymns of Nayanmars and Alwars, Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy, Chola Bronzes, Pallava Temple Architecture as worthy of being counted among the world's treasures of literature and art.

News and Notes

NOMINATION OF DR. SETHU PILLAI TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE SAHITYA AKADEMI

The Executive Board of the Sahitya Akademi at its twelfth meeting held under the chairmanship of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru has nominated Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, Head of the Department of Tamil, University of Madras, as a representative of Madras on the General Council of the Akademi.

TAMIL 'VERSITY FOR CEYLON URGED

The Tamil University Movement has asked the Prime Minister for a date to discuss with him the question of setting up a Tamil University in Ceylon. The leaders of the movement, in a communication to the Prime Minister, have pointed out the need for an independent Tamil University to ensure the preservation and protection of Tamil culture and learning. They contend that the present university at Peradeniya cannot cater to the needs of the Tamil population of the country and that it does not have the Tamil cultural and spiritual atmosphere.

The Movement is not content with the suggestion recently made by the Prime Minister that such a university should only be a cultural university. The leaders say that there is nothing called a cultural university unless the Prime Minister has in mind an institution like Santiniketan. The leaders will ask the Prime Minister that the university be an academic institution conferring academic and professional degrees. They are of the view that the Tamil University should be situated either in the Northern or Eastern Province.

The Hindu—25-8-1957.

HINDI AS INDIA'S OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

AN APPEAL TO THE PRIME MINISTER

1. This is NOT a Political Issue

The opposition to the introduction of Hindi as the official language of the Union is shared by all the sections of the people of South India, although, except the politicians, the others are not clamorous about it. The evidence given by the Madras Government before the Official Languages Commission shows that Congressmen in the south are also opposed to it, the exigencies of party discipline merely serving to tone down the emphasis. The official, business, and educational sections are naturally afraid to oppose the party in power openly.

2. Sentiment or Convenience ?

The culture of India has always been expressed in its various regional languages. Its homogeniety has not suffered thereby. The need for preserving and developing the regional languages is admitted on all hands. They have roots that dive down into the hearts of the people. Hindi is now being sponsored on an all India basis only as an administrative language. There is thus no question of sentiment here, but only one of convenience. Such sentiment as is displayed is a vague political hankering after uniformity, which is confused with unity.

3. The Pros and Cons

Sentiment is an insufficient argument in itself, and is positively dangerous in the face of opposition from large sections of the people whose interests are against the imposition. This opposition is based on the legitimate misgiving that those to whom Hindi is the mother tongue will attain a proficiency in it that others can never hope to achieve, and thus secure for themselves an unfair advantage in official and other fields. The handicap to the others will be permanent. The discrimination may be unconscious, but will nevertheless be real.

It is not disputed that the change-over from an existing and familiar medium to a new and untried one will entail inconvenience. What are the compensating advantages ? None that we can see.

One can understand sentiment in favour of a national language, as against a foreign language, though the sentiment may be politically fallacious. But sentiment in favour of a new official language, as such, in preference to the one that already exists, is artificial. If it is hoped that at some time in the future, Hindi will become the spoken language of all classes in all parts of India, there may be a purpose and a meaning in the present proposal ; but this is clearly an impossible hope.

4. English Offers the MAXIMUM of Convenience

English has to continue as the medium of learning at the highest levels, especially in the fields of science and technology, and all other branches of modern knowledge so far as India is concerned. It is the major language of International intercourse. It is the world's premier language for trade and commerce. It functions usefully in India at the present day, in all walks of life. To replace English is clearly to throw away an available advantage.

5. The imposition of Hindi, far from promoting national unity, will underline fissiparous tendencies

National unity is the result of complex factors. A single language, spoken as the MOTHER TONGUE, by a compact group of people, no doubt contributes to a feeling of oneness, but national unity by no means depends on the existence of one language. If it is imposed by authority on an unwilling section, all the arguments in its favour notwithstanding, it is the surest incentive to the acceleration of differences. That such is the bare truth is proved by the opposition to Hindi even from the Punjab and Bengal, although Punjabi and Bengali have great affinities with Hindi. On the other hand, small countries like Switzerland, and large countries like Canada, where more

than one language has been made official, are examples of national unity based on a recognition of the existence of multi-lingual groups.

6. The Principles of Democracy

Where large parts of the country are affected adversely, and such injury is made manifest to the Government, the procedure of the Parliamentary vote has but a limited significance. It is a negation of the basic principle of democracy, namely, respect and protection of vital minority interests, and not the tyrannous use of the majority vote.

Further, in the context of the present issue, there is a misapprehension about those opposed to Hindi being in a minority. It is not as if those in favour and against are spread all over the country in varying proportions. The whole of South India is opposed to the official policy. This is not the same as a minority of numbers only. It is the opposition of a part of the country itself.

7. The Constitutional Grounds are the least Valid

The plea of constitutional sanctity sounds weak to those who are hurt by the Hindi policy ; especially as the Articles that find disfavour with the Government are being changed in every session of Parliament. At the time of the framing of the Constitution, anti-British feeling had not subsided. It is also disclosed that, within the Congress party, the proposal for making Hindi the official language did not secure a majority vote on the first two occasions, and that even on the third occasion, it was accepted by a majority of one vote. If the present Constitutional principle of two thirds majority is invoked, the party vote is seen to be no sanction in favour. Besides, the vote is a reflection of the equal strength of division in the country itself.

8. The Date Line for Hindi

Those who urge the introduction of Hindi at a later date do not all support it on the same grounds. Some are anxious to put off the evil day. Some hope that postponement may lead to abandonment. On the other hand, there

are others who think that given time, Hindi will develop and eventually claim its place on merits. A few want to give the non-Hindi speaking peoples time to become more proficient in it. In this welter of confused and contradictory thinking, the main issue, whether there are sufficient reasons to change the *status quo,* is ignored.

Speaking for the people of the south, if as we believe they are opposed to Hindi on grounds of fair play and justice, and if, as seems clear to us, there are no advantages in replacing English as an official language, then, in the interests of national unity, and the eradication of centrifugal forces, it is imperative that the present Hindi policy should be abandoned. There is already a feeling that the south is being neglected by the centre. This may or may not be the whole truth. But it is political unwisdom to feed this fear by facilitating the domination of the rest of India by Hindi speaking people. It is to be hoped that when the champions of Hindi get over their initial disappointment, their innate patriotism will assert itself, and show them the necessity for unity based on understanding.

9. THE NEXT STEP IS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER

On this issue of the official language, in which different groups and different states are working at cross purposes, and there has developed a sorry state of emotional disintegration, no one save the Prime Minister can interfere with impartiality, reconcile the differences, and place the national interest above all else. We appeal to him to step in, and bring about a reconsideration of the entire issue, so that the spirit of true freedom is maintained, and not sacrificed at the altar of what we respectfully submit, is the over-zealous love, on the part of some, for their own language.

Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar (Former Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai, & Benares Universities)

Mr. K. Srinivasan (Editor, *Hindu*)

Mr. T. M. Krishnaswami Aiyar (Former Chief Justice, Travancore State)

Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar (Former Governor-General of India)

Mr. S. G. Manavala Ramanujam (Former Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University)

Mr. S. Anantharamakrishnan (Leading Industrialist)

Mr. R. V. Krishna Ayyar (Former Secretary, Madras Legislative Assembly)

Mr. C. R. Srinivasan (Editor, *Swadesamitran*)

Mr. A. N. Sivaraman (Editor, *Dhinamani*)

Mr. S. B. Adityan (Editor, *Thinathanthi*)

Mr. S. S. Vasan (Editor, *Anandavikatan*)

Mr. T. Sadasivam (Editor, *Kalki*)

Mr. Khasa Subba Rau (Editor, *Swarajya*)

Mr. V. L. Ethiraj (President, Bar Association)

Mr. V. C. Gopalaratnam (President, Advocates' Association)

Mr. M. S. A. Majid (Hon. Secretary, Muslim Educational Association of South India)

Mr. M. Subbaraya Iyer (Correspondent, Vivekananda College & Madras Institute of Technology)

Mr. R. Krishnamurti (Principal, Pachaiyappa's College)

Mr. M. K. Shanmugam (Principal, Sir Theagaraya College)

Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai (Professor of Tamil, University of Madras)

Mr. M. M. Bhat (Professor of Kannada, University of Madras)

Mrs. Rukmini Devi Arundale (Kalakshetra, Adyar)

Mrs. M. S. Subbulakshmi (Renowned Musician)

Mr. T. K. Shanmugam (Renowned Actor of the Tamil Stage)

Mr. T. K. Bhagavathi (Renowned Actor of the Tamil Stage)

Mr. A. G. Venkatachary (President, Tamil Writers' Association)

Mr. S. R. Venkataraman (Secretary, Servants of India Society)

Mr. K. Kodandapani Pillai (Secretary, Academy of Tamil Culture)

Mr. A. Subbiah (President, Institute of South Indian Affairs)

Mr. S. Narayanaswamy (General Secretary, Y.M.I.A.)

Mr. P. J. Ananthraj (General Secretary, Y.M.C.A.)

Mrs. L. A. Pithavadian (President, Y.W.C.A.)

Mr. H. C. Kothari (President, Madras Stock Exchange)

Mr. V. S. L. Nathan (Hon. Secretary, Tamil Chamber of Commerce)

Mr. S. Chellaswamy (Secretary, Union Language Convention)

—*The Indian Express* : 29-10-1957.

ARCHITECTURAL AND SCULPTURAL MONUMENTS OF INDIA

A Review of this was published in the 1957 January issue of *Tamil Culture,* Vol. VI, No. 1, vide page 79. This map is available at M/s. N. M. Tripathi Private Ltd., Princess Street, Bombay-2 and its price is Rs. 5/-: or Sh. 10/- : or $ 1.50.

BOOKS RECEIVED

PROFESSOR P. SUNDARAM PILLAI COMMEMORATION VOLUME. Published by The South India Saiva Siddhantha Works Publishing Society, Tinnevelly Ltd., 1/140, Broadway, Madras-1. Pages 179. Price Rs. 8/-.

Transliteration of Tamil Phonemes* into English

VOWELS

அ	—	a	(as in **among**)
ஆ	—	a:	(„ **calm**)
இ	—	i	(„ **sit**)
ஈ	—	i:	(„ **machine**)
உ	—	u	(„ **full**)
ஊ	—	u:	(„ **rule**)
எ	—	e	(„ **fed**)
ஏ	—	e:	(„ **able**)
ஐ	—	ai	(„ **aisle**)
ஒ	—	o	(„ **opinion**)
ஓ	—	o:	(„ **opium**)
ஔ	—	au	(„ **now**)

CONSONANTS

				Hints re: articulation
Hard[1] (Plosive)	க	—	k	(as in **king**, **angle**, **alhambra**)
	ச	—	c	(„ **church**, **angel**, **calcium**)
	ட	—	t:	(„ **card** ?)....Retroflex - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
	த	—	th	(„ **threat**, **this**, **thick**)....dental.
	ப	—	p	(„ **pipe**, **amber**)
	ற	—	t	(„ **atlas**, **sunday**, **arrears**)..Retroflex-articulate with **tip** of tongue.
Soft (Nasal)	ங	—	ng	(„ **sing**)....velar n
	ஞ	—	nj	(„ **angel**)....palatal n
	ண	—	n:	(„ **urn** ?)....Retroflex n - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
	ந	—	nh	(„ **anthem**)....dental n
	ம	—	m	(„ **mate**)
	ன	—	n	(„ **enter**)....Retroflex n - articulate with **tip** of tongue.
Medium (non-nasal continuant)	ய	—	y	(„ **yard**)
	ர	—	r	(„ **red**)
	ல	—	l	(„ **leave**)....Alveolar l - articulate with **tip** of tongue.
	வ	—	v	(„ **very**)
	ழ	—	l-	(„ ?)....Retroflex l - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
	ள	—	l:	(„ **hurl**)....Alveolar l - articulate with **blade** of tongue.
Auxiliary[2] (ஆய்தம்)	ஃ	—	x	(„ **ahead**)

---

* The Tamil phonemes may for practical purposes be treated as having single allophones only, except in the case of the hard consonants which have four allophones each, as shown in note 1 on the reverse.

1. The Phonemes, classified as *hard,* have normally an *unaspirated unvoiced* value but acquire the following modified values if preceded by a consonant:—

   (a) a *slightly aspirated* unvoiced value, if preceded by a *plosive or hard consonant.*

   e.g., பக்கம் - is pronounced pakkham, not pakkam

   (b) an unaspirated but *voiced* value, if preceded by a *nasal or soft consonant*:—

   e.g., பங்கம் - is pronounced pangam, not pankam
   பஞ்சம் - „ panjam, not pancam,

   (c) a *fricative* value if preceded by a *non-nasal continuant or medium consonant or by the auxiliary consonant.*

   e.g., பல்கலை becomes palhalai not palkalai
   எஃகு „ ehhu not exku

NOTE.—In most present day dialects, the plosive assumes a fricative —sometimes a voiced—value after a vowel also, except in the case of t : which retains its normal unaspirated, unvoiced value even after a vowel.

2. The value of this *auxiliary* phoneme, which must *always* be followed by a hard consonant, was variable during the time of Tholkappiam; it acquired a phonetic value identical with that of the following hard consonant, vide 1 (c) above,

   e.g., எஃகு became ehhu

   Later its value became fixed as h, irrespective of the following consonant.

Note. (i) With a view to keep down transliteration to the minimum it is suggested that, in the case of Tamil words which are already in free use in English (e g , Tamil = Thamil), or where it is unnecessary to indicate the exact pronunciation, accurate transliteration need not be resorted to. In the case of proper names etc., which occur more than once in the same article, the transliteration need be shown only once in brackets side by side with a free English adaptation, the latter alone being used subsequently, except of course in cases where such a procedure will lead to ambiguity,

e.g., வேங்கடம் = Vengadam (Ve : ngkat : am).

(ii) Reference may be made to *Tamil Culture,* Vol. IV, No. 1 (January 1955 issue) pp. 58-73 for fuller details.

THE TAMIL SCRIPT

(This table is given for the guidance of those who wish to read Tamil texts which often appear in TAMIL CULTURE)

Vowels	Vowel symbols attached to preceding consonant.	Hard consonants						Soft consonants						Medium consonants					
		k	c	t	th	p	t	ng	nj	n·	nh	m	n	y	r	l	v	l–	l:
அ a	nil	க	ச	ட	த	ப	ற	ங	ஞ	ண	ந	ம	ன	ய	ர	ல	வ	ழ	ள
ஆ a	ா to the right of the consonant	கா					றா			ணா			னா						
இ i	ி to be *joined* at the top—right of consonant	கி																	
ஈ i:	ீ to be *joined* at the top—right of consonant	கீ																	
உ u	a semi circle ◡, a vertical stroke ı or a loop to be *joined* to the bottom	கு	சு	டு	து	பு	று	ஙு	ஞு	ணு	நு	மு	னு	யு	ரு	லு	வு	ழு	ளு
ஊ u:	Same as for u, but with an additional stroke or loop	கூ	சூ	டூ	தூ	பூ	றூ	ஙூ	ஞூ	ணூ	நூ	மூ	னூ	யூ	ரூ	லூ	வூ	ழூ	ளூ
எ e	ெ to the left of the consonant	கெ																	
ஏ e	ே to the left of the consonant	கே																	
ஐ ai	ை to the left of the consonant	கை								ணை			னை			லை			ளை
ஒ o	ெ to the left & ா to the right of the consonant	கொ					றொ			ணொ			னொ						
ஓ o.	ே to the left & ா to the right	கோ					றோ			ணோ			னோ						
ஔ au	ெ to the left & ள to the right	கௌ																	
மெய் pure consonants	A dot · on the top of the consonant	க்																	

Note—(1) The vowels are written as shown in the first vertical column

(2) The consonants are written as shown in the horizontal columns, with a symbol or symbols indicating the vowel immediately following A consonant followed by the vowel அ (a) has no symbol, while the pure consonant not followed by a vowel has a dot on top

(3) All the eighteen vowel consonants under க (k) are shown as a guide in other cases only the irregular forms are shown, the rest being exactly similar to those shown under க (k), excepting for trivial differences in a few cases which might safely be ignored

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL FOR 1957-58.

Rev. S. Arulsamy, S.J., Loyola College

Mr. S. Arumuga Mudaliar.

Rev. P. Ceyrac, S.J., Loyola College

Mr. S. Chellaswamy.

Dr. A. Chidambaranatha Chettiar, Annamalai University

• Isaiarasu M. M. Dandapani Desigar.

Dr. V. A. Devasenapathi, University of Madras.

Mr. K. Ganesh.

„ M. M. Ghani, Divisional Inspector of Schools, Madurai

„ S. Maharaja Pillai

Dr S G. Manavala Ramanujam

Mr. T. P. Meenakshisundaram Pillai, Presidency College

„ O. RM. M. SP SV M. Meyappa Chettiar

„ C. A. Mohamed Ibrahim

„ A. M. M. Murugappa Chettiar

„ M. Ct. Muthiah

„ T. M. Narayanasamy Pillai, M.L.C. Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University.

Dr. B. Natarajan

Mrs. Ratna Navaratnam

Mr. S. M. Palaniappa Chettiar

„ A. C. Paul Nadar

Dr. K. K. Pillai, University of Madras

Mr P. T. Rajan

„ A. Ramanatha Pillai, Thiagarajar College, Madurai.

„ K. V AL. M. Ramanathan Chettiar

„ R. Ramanathan Chettiar

„ S Ramasami Konar

„ V Seshasayee

„ T K Shanmugam

„ V. Subbiah Pillai

„ P M Sundaram, Osmania University.

„ Puthaneri R. Subramanian

Mr. Justice V Subramaniam

Mr. V. Sundaramurthi Mudaliar

Rev. Dr. Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, University of Ceylon

Mr. A. N. Sattanathan

Dr. M. Varadarajan

Mr. N. K. Vinayakam

TAMIL CULTURE

Subscriptions, advertisements, and remittances should be addressed to : The Manager, *Tamil Culture,* 5-B Aiyavu Naidu Street, Madras-30.

Subscriptions are best remitted in the form of crossed Postal orders or cheques or Bank drafts *payable in India* drawn in favour of *Tamil Culture.* Cheques not drawn on a Bank in Madras should include the Bank's collecting commission of 50 naye paises. V. P. P. charges are extra.

Subscriptions and remittances may also be remitted to :

CEYLON : Kalaivani Book Centre, 130, Trincomalie Street, Kandy.

MALAYA : Manager, *Tamil Murasu,* 71, Selegie Road, Singapore 7.

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION (effective from 1956) :

	India, Ceylon, Burma, Malaya	U. K.	U. S. A. & other countries
Annual	**Rs. 7**	**Sh. 12/6**	**U. S. $ 2·00** or its equivalent
Single Copy	**Rs. 2**	**Sh. 4**	**U. S. $ 0·75.**

As back numbers are usually sold out quickly, we are unable to guarantee supply of back numbers to subscribers who send their subscriptions for any year after one or more issues for that year are out. In such cases we can only supply subsequent issues of the year at single copy rates. Subscribers are therefore requested to send their subscriptions, renewal or fresh, to reach us by 31st December.

Literary communications, Exchange, and Books for review should be addressed to the Chief Editor, *Tamil Culture,* 5-B, Aiyavu Naidu Street, Madras-30.

To secure their return, if not accepted, the Mss. offered for publication should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. The Editor does not take any responsibility for Mss. that may be lost. Mss. should be typewritten and sent in duplicate to facilitate printing.

The expression of individual views by contributors or reviewers does not imply editorial endorsement.

Published by Dr. M. Varadarajan for Academy of Tamil Culture, 5-B, Aiyavu Naidu Street, Madras-30 and printed by K. S. S. Rajan at The Jupiter Press Private Ltd., 109-C, Mount Road, Madras-18.

NOTE : From 1-2-1958 the address of the office of TAMIL CULTURE will be 13 Clemens Road, Madras-7.